KAI **RUFFING** KERSTIN **DROß-KRÜPE**
SEBASTIAN **FINK** ROBERT **ROLLINGER** (EDS.)

MELAMMU SYMPOSIA 10

SOCIETIES AT WAR

Proceedings of the tenth Symposium of the Melammu Project
held in Kassel September 26-28 2016

&

Proceedings of the eight Symposium of the Melammu Project
held in Kiel November 11-15 2014

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KAI RUFFING, KERSTIN DROSS-KRÜPE,
SEBASTIAN FINK, ROBERT ROLLINGER (EDS.)

SOCIETIES AT WAR

ÖSTERREICHISCHE AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN
PHILOSOPHISCH HISTORISCHE KLASSE

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VERLAG DER
ÖSTERREICHISCHEN
AKADEMIE DER
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Angenommen durch die Publikationskommission der philosophisch-historischen Klasse der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften:

Accepted by the publication committee of the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Austrian Academy of Sciences:

Michael Alram, Bert G. Fragner, Andre Gingrich, Hermann Hunger, Sigrid Jalkotzy-Deger, Renate Pillinger, Franz Rainer, Oliver Jens Schmitt, Danuta Shanzer, Peter Wiesinger, Waldemar Zacharasiewicz

The Melammu Logo was drawn by Rita Berg from a Greco-Persian style seal found on the north-eastern shore of the Black Sea. Cf. Dominique Collon, *First Impressions: Cylinder Seals in the Ancient Near East,* British Museum Publications, London 1987, seal no. 432. The seal was vectorized by Angela Turri.

Diese Publikation wurde einem anonymen, internationalen Begutachtungsverfahren unterzogen.

This publication was subject to international and anonymous peer review.

Peer review is an essential part of the Austrian Academy of Sciences Press evaluation process. Before any book can be accepted for publication, it is assessed by international specialists and ultimately must be approved by the Austrian Academy of Sciences Publication Committee.

Die verwendete Papiersorte in dieser Publikation ist DIN EN ISO 9706 zertifiziert und erfüllt die Voraussetzung für eine dauerhafte Archivierung von schriftlichem Kulturgut.

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Austrian Academy of Sciences
Wien/Vienna 2020
ISBN 978-3-7001-8572-7
Layout: Daniela Seiler, Vienna
Printed: Ferdinand Berger & Söhne, Horn
https://epub.oeaw.ac.at/8572-7
https://verlag.oeaw.ac.at
Made in Europe

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Acknowledgements

We owe thanks to numerous people for numerous reasons. First, we would like to offer heartfelt gratitude to all the contributors for their engaged participation, their collegiality and patience throughout the process of editing this volume, and for delivering substantial papers of high quality. Second, we owe gratitude to all those who lent a helping hand concerning administrative and organisational assistance while conducting the conference – Jane Parsons-Sauer, Rebecca Frei, Carolin Th. Hols, Falk Ruttloh and Louisa D. Thomas. In addition, we are further grateful to Robert Rollinger as former Chair of the Melammu Project for entrusting us with the realisation of the 10th Melammu Symposium at Kassel University. Finally, we owe thanks to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) for providing financial support for the organisation of the conference in Kassel.

Due to unforeseeable circumstances, which prevented the organisers from editing their own proceedings, some papers of the 8th Symposium of the Melammu Project "Iranian Worlds", held at Kiel in November 2014, have been added to this volume in their own section.

Participants of Melammu Symposium 10: Societies at War (© Lion Arendt)

Societies at War – Introduction

Kerstin Droß-Krüpe, Sebastian Fink & Kai Ruffing

War and war-related issues have attracted an increasing attention within modern historical and archaeological research, not least in response to recent global political events. Another reason for this growing interest is probably a general trend towards Modern Military History that – especially since the late 1990s and 2000s – has drawn academic attention to war-related issues through all cultures and epochs. This is true for Classical Studies with their emphasis on the Greek and Roman world as well as for those historical disciplines that focus on the history and culture of ancient Central Asia. In the classical studies, this interest in war manifests itself in special studies, but also in the presentation of relevant overview descriptions.[1] The latter are joined by anthologies which address the subject of war and are decidedly committed to modern military history. One example of this is a volume published in the year 2014 that brought together results of a research project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Technology with those of other specialists in the field, in particular concentrating on the effects of war on civilians.[2] Furthermore, the "52^{e} Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale – International Congress of Assyriology and Near Eastern Archaeology" whose proceedings were published in 2014 was dedicated to the topic war and peace.[3]

It seems particularly promising to consider war no longer a continuation of politics by other means, following Carl von Clausewitz, but rather a phenomenon that was an essential part of the culture of ancient societies

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1 Mann 2013; Eich 2015; Madreiter 2015.

2 Nadali – Vidal 2014. Further visible evidence for the growing interest in the topic of war and related social phenomena is the research project "Kriegsfolgen: Römische Niederlagen. Niederlagen und Verluste als Phänomene einer erweiterten Militärgeschichte", led by Prof. Dr. Oliver Stoll from the University of Passau, Meier – Stoll 2016.

3 Neumann et al. 2014.

as well as of every-day-life in the ancient world. Against this background, it appears reasonable to abandon the dichotomy between the 'Greco-Roman World' and the 'Ancient Near East' and to enter new scientific territory by means of a comparative analysis. Therefore, in the context of the International Conference "Societies at War" in November 2016, representatives of classical studies and the disciplines dealing with the history of the Ancient Near East were invited to lecture on certain topics within the respective panel. The potential of this approach is the promotion of an intellectual interchange between the participating fields of expertise. We want to explore the chances and boundaries of a methodical, regional and cultural analysis of different textual and material sources as well as a monocultural examination, and we aim to traverse disciplines, strengthen international cooperation, identify research gaps and discuss new research perspectives.

We are proud to present the proceedings of this conference in the present volume, though it cannot claim to include all papers presented. In fact, only two thirds of all presentations made it into this volume due to a variety of reasons. Still, it was decided to stick to the original panels but alter the original concept in such a way as to forgo the response papers and only have one or both panel chairs author an introduction outlining the core issues of the panel in its original composition. Thus, for example, the lectures in the panel "War and Ritual" deal with the religious aspects of ancient warfare, such as rituals at the beginning of a war, the significance of omens, or the religious charging when ethical boundaries were crossed. The panel "War and Legitimacy" is dedicated to the examination of strategies for legitimising not only the conduct of war, but also the extent to which war served to secure the political position of rulers or leaders and elites in a body politic. The panel "War and Numbers" discusses how numbers were utilized in different societies of the ancient world and across all kinds of historical sources for presenting war to a broad audience, for example, to which extent the official representation of troop strengths and numbers of killed soldiers might have influenced the narrative traditions. The panel "War and Civilians" deals with sad topicality with non-combatants in the classical world and Ancient Near East that became victims of actual warfare operations or their post-war consequences. The panel focuses on deportation, flight, mass killings, enslavement, looting, war crimes and the wilful impairment of livelihood such as the destruction of plantations.

Our hope is that, in the long run, this volume can make a contribution to place the diverse relationships and connections between the Middle East

and the Mediterranean world more centre-stage. This is to ensure not only an intense scientific discussion between individual disciplines, but also to build awareness of similarities and differences in the various societies as a foundation for future comparative studies on war as a complex and socially highly relevant topic area.

Throughout this volume ancient sources and corpora are abbreviated according to the following criteria: Brill's New Pauly for classical Greek and Latin literature and corpora, the Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets[4] for papyri and ostraca, and the Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie (RlA) for ancient Near Eastern source material. For sources not included in these scholarly works the contributors have chosen designations as clear as possible.

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[4] http://library.duke. edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/papyrus/texts/clist.html

Introduction: "War and Numbers"

Hannes D. Galter & Kai Ruffing

One of the most famous tales of the Greco-Persian Wars – at least in western culture – is the story of the 300 Spartans fighting against the Persian troops advancing towards the south of Greece at the Thermopylae. Making their last stand here 299 of the Spartans were killed in action, one, called Aristodemos, survived and was killed later on in the battle of Plataea (Hdt. 7,201–233, esp. 223–229). This total defeat of the Spartan troops had an intensive reception in the western world.[1] It might be enough to mention here the comic book and the movie 300, which nicely illustrates how intensive this reception is even in popular culture until today.[2] Herodotus' narration of the battle at the Hot Gates demonstrates clearly the importance of numbers in staging the battle and the war in historiography.[3] Most interestingly, the number 300 made its own career in the reception. During the Napoleonic Wars and the famous fight of the Tyrolean people for liberty under the leadership of Andreas Hofer there are often references to 300 soldiers killed in action. Actually, 300 Tyrolean women are said to have been killed in a battle against the French.[4] Also in the American Civil War the number 300 matters. In the battle of Gettysburg, the Confederates advanced under the command of George Pickett towards the positions held by the troops of the Union on Cemetery Hill. A brigade under the command of Lewis Armistead advanced furthest breaking into the positions of the Union. Armistead was followed by 300 of his men in doing this attack and was killed at the moment in which he touched a cannon of the Union with his hand. Although Pickett's charge failed, Armistead's breakthrough

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1 See Albertz, 2006.

2 On both see Kofler, 2011.

3 See Ruffing, 2013.

4 Cf. Lorenz, 1986, 243–244. But see Ruffing, 2013, 211 n. 43.

became famous as the 'High Tide' of the Confederation, since Confederate troops never advanced further in the territory of the Union.[5]

Thus the 300 is an important number for staging war. Other numbers matter as well. Thus in 143 BCE the Roman consul Appius Claudius Pulcher waged war against the Salassi living in the Duria Valley, today's Aosta Valley. It is interesting to see how the war was staged by Orosius in his *historiae adverum paganos* in the 5th century CE. Initially, the Roman consul was defeated by the Salassi and 5,000 Roman soldiers were killed. Then, after having sacrificed in hostile land, he advanced again and defeated the Salassi killing 5,000 of them. The body count gave him the right to celebrate a triumph in Rome, but the Senate refused to allow him to celebrate the triumph, which Appius then did privately (Oros. 5,4,7).

Numbers for the staging of war are also found in the Near Eastern tradition.[6] They were a very useful tool in formulating reasons for fighting, estimating the outcome of war or calculating its length and the expenses of fighting. Numbers are an easy way to make historical comparisons. One of the most telling examples that can be found in Assyrian royal inscriptions are the 28,800 Hittites Tukulti-Ninurta I mentions as being deported by his troops. This number doubles exactly the 14,400 Syrian deportees his father Shalmaneser I names in his inscription.[7]

Another example is provided by the Cyrus Cylinder, where is stated: "His massive troops, whose number was immeasurable like the water of the river, marched with their arms at their side." (Kuhrt 2007, 70 no. 21, line 16). And Darius, after having become king of Persia, described his deeds in the Behistun-Inscription and summarized what he did as follows: "Darius the king proclaims: This (is) what I have done, by the favour of Auramazda, in one and the same year, after I became king. I have fought nineteen battles. By the favour of Auramazda, I defeated them and took nine kings prisoner…" (Kuhrt, 2007, 141–151, no. 1, § 52).

We have further to distinguish between real figures, round figures, exaggerated figures and symbolic figures. The analysis of the Ebla material, the Assyrian letters or the writings of Caesar has shown that ancient authors did use authentic and exact numbers. It was a question of temporal proximity. On the other hand, text written later such as royal inscriptions or literary texts sometimes differ considerably. At least

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5 Cf. Keegan, 2012, 273–274.

6 See De Odorico, 1995.

7 See Galter, 1988.

in Mesopotamian royal inscriptions round figures seem to be the most common way of enumeration. Already the earliest historical inscription from Mesopotamia so far, the Early Dynastic II stele from Kish, lists a total of 36,000 prisoners of war, who were captured by Kish during its foreign conquests.[8] In historiography and political texts, they were of greater benefit than exact numbers. They were more comprehensible and could be used more easily in historical comparisons. This perception found its way even into modern translations. Riekele Borger tried to render Assyrian round figures with modern ones.[9]

Exaggerated figures can be found in almost all biased texts from Sumerian royal inscriptions to Roman historical writings. Herodotus (Hdt. 7,186) for instance gave the total number of men serving in Xerxes' army as 5,283,220. In his 'Persian perspective' on the events in 480/479 B.C. Theodore Cuyler Young Jr. argued convincingly that these numbers are highly exaggerated:

> "If the infantry marched ten abreast and the cavalry five abreast, the Persian column would be about 1,320 miles long. By modern road it is approximately 608 miles from where the Persians crossed the Hellespont to Athens. Thus, on Herodotus' count, half of the Persian column would still not have crossed the Hellespont when the head of the column was setting fire to the Acropolis." (Cuyler Young Jr., 1980, 217, n. 8)

This exaggeration served as a literary tool to highlight the glorious resistance of the notorious 300 – the symbolic triumph of 'the so few' over 'the so many'.

Symbolic figures occur only rarely in Mesopotamian military accounts but became more common in later periods as mentioned above. Nevertheless, we must be prepared that some of the enumeration thought to be 'round', 'exaggerated' or 'symbolic' now might turn out to be rather exact in the future. We still lack part, for some periods and areas most, of the ancient documentation and we have almost no information at all 'from the other side'. The 'voice of the defeated' is extremely silent in ancient sources.

On the other hand, we can observe certain historical dynamics in some text corpora. In his study on the use of quantifications in Assyrian royal inscriptions Marco de Odorico described how moderate round numbers were slowly replaced by high exact numbers that later became

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[8] See Steinkeller, 2013, 133.

[9] See Borger, 1964, 57.

standardized.[10] Taking this into consideration, most quantifications should be considered as the outcome of a narrative or editorial process.

The examples mentioned above clearly hint at the importance of numbers in describing, narrating and staging war in the ancient as well as in the modern world. The following papers are a first step in order to explore, how numbers in different ancient societies and in different types of sources were used for this purpose. Thus, Davide Nadali analyzes the nature and function of counting in the Neo-Assyrian period. Closer attention will be paid to exact, round and explicit high numbers in the Neo-Assyrian documents and their relation to reality. Then Reinhold Bichler will analyze in his paper the use of numbers in Herodotus. As he will show the numbers here were meaningful for the literary narrative and the interpretation, which Herodotus had for past events. As matter of consequence, Herodotus has to be conceived not only as the father of history, but also as the father of numbers for the western tradition. Patrick Reinhard, finally, will explore the use of numbers in Roman historiography and pay closer attention to the *Corpus Caesarianum* and the payments of tributes by Roman emperors, which were used by ancient authors to make a judgement about the emperors.

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[10] See De Odorico 1995, 159–176.

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Numbers Matter. On the Nature and Function of Counting in Warfare in the Neo-Assyrian Period

Davide Nadali

Cinque ... dieci ... venti ... trenta ...
trentasei ... quarantatré ...

(Mozart / Da Ponte, *Le nozze di Figaro*, Act I, scene 1)

Introduction

Numbers and warfare are strictly bounded: in particular, war is a very special situation where numbers acquire a very important meaning and function. Even nowadays, when speaking of and analysing war, we are inevitably attracted by numbers and, we could say, numbers precisely dictate the reason and choice of war on the one hand, and the outcome and implication of fighting on the other. In particular, after the battle is over, a virtual fight of numbers begins comparing victories and losses, survivors and fallen. It can be said that numbers substantiate war and war is founded upon numbers: the present paper analyses the meaning and function of numbers in the Assyrian sources trying to go beyond the too-simplistic conclusion of the use of high numbers because of mere aims of propaganda. In the end, it cannot be totally denied that propaganda actually had a significant and coercive influence in the creation and registration of numerical data, but I think that the context (in addition to the content) of use can explain the multifaceted meanings of numbers in the Assyrian sources. In this respect, instead of simply considering the quantitative nature of numbers – that is in fact the most direct and immediate aspect – it is equally important to look at the qualitative implications of numbers in written and visual Assyrian media, paying attention to the places where those numbers were displayed and declared and the type of audience it was supposed they were addressed to. Numbers deeply characterize the nature of Assyrian sources: royal inscriptions and the daily letters sent

by the officials to the king are dotted with numbers and these do not exclusively refer to war and the management of military campaigns. Nevertheless, it is evident that warfare and the outcome of wars are one of the main, if not the most important, topics of official written sources: this is the reason why numbers in Assyrian sources are often questioned as the different editions of the royal annals describe the same event differently, recording different amounts of enemies killed or captured.[1] At the same time, Assyrian war numbers are very selective as they always refer to casualties and losses of the enemies, while they are silent (except in one very special case) on the death and defeats of the Assyrian army.[2] However, discrepant numbers are also found in sources that do not deal with warfare, as for example the accounts of the building activities by the Assyrian kings.[3] In this case, numbers are treated differently by scholars: no propaganda implications are inferred and the discrepancy of numbers is explained as the result of the ongoing works of the Assyrian king who precisely reports the progress of his activities year by year. If the numbers of war (calculating the totals of cities destroyed, enemies killed, prisoners, booty, weapons, and military men) change from one edition to another, propaganda is not the only reason to be taken into consideration.

Coming back to war, numbers are used to describe the success of fighting and the outcomes of the war that has been fought – numbers are the most useful and explicit tool to point out the military success of an army, exalting the high percentage of enemies killed or captured, cities and places destroyed or conquered, the efficiency and quantity of soldiers and war machines employed in the battles. Conversely, the same numbers can be used to describe the situation suffered by civilians and the hard consequences of war on the civil population, material things, and environment: this means that it depends on how one considers the Assyrian texts relating

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1 See for example the list of variations provided and analysed by De Odorico, 1995: 45–74.

2 Vidal, 2013.

3 The accounts of the building activities of Sennacherib at Nineveh are particularly interesting and illustrative: several texts describe the works for the renovation of Nineveh and the construction of Sennacherib's palace. Numbers in this case refer to the ongoing activities, giving for example the increasing dimensions of the palace (that reaches the final size of 503 × 242 m in 694 BC) or the total of the city gates (14 in the annals edition of 607–695 BC; 15 in 694 BC and finally 18 in 691 BC). See the edition of Sennacherib's texts dealing with building activities by Grayson / Novotny, 2012: 16–22. See also Reade, 2000.

to the quantities of prisoners and deported people; reading texts from an Assyrian perspective, those numbers are the exaltation of the Assyrian success; looking at those texts as administrative documents (despite the possible exaggeration), those numbers give the reality that conquered people might have suffered. This aspect is clear when the correspondence between the Assyrian officials in the provinces and the king in the capital are taken into account: the high numbers of prisoners of war are not at all a matter of pride but they imply difficulties in managing the logistics (space and enough food).[4]

Actually, even in recent wars, this is a quite natural and common situation: numbers matter and the often exaggerated and misleading use of numbers from both parties (winners and losers) consequently generates a warfare of numbers – the amounts become the real content of the battles and the declaration of numbers of people and things involved in and affected by war often becomes the cause of a virtual warfare that does not properly involve the use of weapons and men (proclamations, statements, and reports from both sides).

In this respect, references to contemporary wars could be an interesting starting point to reconsider the nature of numbers in ancient warfare: indeed, it might even be considered a turning point in the analysis of ancient wars and the way numbers were registered in ancient documents. Numbers are the result of specific and precise operations, mathematical and administrative operations on one hand, and political and communication operations on the other: as a consequence, they are the result of registration of data that, in war, mostly concern the quantity of soldiers, enemies killed and captured, booty, animals, and devices employed.[5]

In the analysis of the data, different issues and persons have to be taken into consideration:

1) who is counting;
2) what is counted;
3) why things and people are counted;
4) the use of positive and negative numbers as a balanced or unbalanced comparison between win and loss;
5) where numbers were finally used, displayed, and announced.

The analysis of numbers should not be limited to the simple numerical

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[4] Fales, 2006; Nadali, 2014: 106–107; Dezsö, 2016: 85–91.

[5] See the records collected by De Odorico, 1995.

value they express, but rather it should also point to the implication that the registration of total amounts has: warfare is doubtless a favourite field of research since numbers, as we said, cover several aspects of the military life and army organization. For that reason, it is important that the examination of how numbers matter in warfare must necessarily pass through the consideration of the points mentioned above: it might happen that not all points can be clearly and satisfactorily answered as it principally depends on the nature of the sources at our disposal and the way ancient scribes registered the numbers.

The Use of Numbers in the Assyrian Administration

Warfare in Assyria was a very common and frequent activity that contributed to the growth of the empire, from the 9th to the 7th century BC: a growth not only from the point of view of the conquest of new territory, but also an economic development with high numbers of people involved in the war as members of the Assyrian army, high numbers of deportees that were employed in the civilian and military administration of the empire for construction, labour, and specialized personnel.[6] Assyria was a well-organized administrative machine: written sources, letters in particular, show how the territory was carefully controlled with the dispatch of almost-daily letters to the Assyrian kings by the officials and governors in the provinces of the empire as well as by a sophisticated system of espionage.[7] The act of registering numbers and events related to war was of course very important and it necessarily involved many levels of the administration: military dispatches and letters refer to the organization of the movement of the troops, the collection of soldiers, animals, and machines for the preparation of the military campaign and of the single battle, and the management of prisoners of war in temporary camps before they are moved to their final destinations.[8]

For what precisely concerns the registration of numbers, Assyrian scribes and officials register different kinds of amounts on several written documents: daily letters of the regular administration of the provinces of the empire shed light on the mechanism of management of huge quantities of people, animals and things (for example food supply or shelters that

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6 De Odorico, 1995: 10; Nadali / Verderame, 2014.

7 Fales, 2001: 92–96; 2010: 56–57; Dezsö, 2014.

8 Postgate, 2000; Fales, 2006.

are of course necessary in winter time and in inhospitable situations and regions such as the mountains in Urartu).[9]

Because of the large quantity of letters (although we can still speak of incomplete and partial documentation),[10] we have many numbers at our disposal: however, I will not precisely focus on the detailed analysis of single numbers – the insightful study by Marco De Odorico is still the reference book for the issues of how we have to consider and deal with the categories of exact, round, and explicit high numbers of the Assyrian sources.[11] Being a consistent part of the written evidence of the Assyrians, numbers are a fundamental contribution to the knowledge of the ancient Assyrian society and the military organization in particular: the annals and the official court texts explicitly created by the royal chancellery follow a precise code and canon of expression and wording and give a partial view of the numbers of the army and outcomes of the military campaigns by the Assyrian king:[12] that is, numbers are selected and they are reported quite quickly and roughly, giving exact (estimated), usually quite high, amounts that should however not sound too unrealistic and obviously inflated.[13] At the same time, even for letters, we can speak of the partiality of the information they provide: since they refer to specific episodes that occurred in recent days or even hours, the data they register and refer to the king are probably too precise and limited to the most recent events.[14] The numbers they give can of course change and it is only the entire corpus of a correspondence that can precisely give the content of the message and the total numbers of people and things involved. So,

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9 SAA I 11, 219; SAA V 156; Fales, 2006: 59; Nadali, 2014; Nadali / Verderame, 2014: 557.

10 The use of perishable materials (leather, papyrus, wax-covered tablets) to write documents in Aramaic certainly caused the loss of several letters of the correspondence, in particular, of the 7th century BC (Parpola, 1981: 122–123; Radner, 2014: 85).

11 De Odorico, 1995: 4–8.

12 On the code of the Assyrian official inscriptions (namely royal inscriptions) and its implications in deciphering and translating, see Cogan / Tadmor, 1997; Grayson, 1981; Levine, 1981; Liverani, 1973; Tadmor, 1981; 1997; finally see the overall evaluation of recent trends in assyriological and historical studies of the Assyrian royal inscriptions by Fales, 1999–2001.

13 Scribes prefer to use numbers such as 100,225 or 200,150 instead of the exact round digits like 100,000 or 200,000 (De Odorico, 1995: 171–172).

14 This also depends on the fragmentary condition of letters as well as on the fact that letters are usually undated (Parpola, 1981: 125); Dezsö, 2006a: 93.

together with the points previously discussed, we should also take into consideration when numbers have been registered: the question of time is fundamental because the progression of events necessarily involves a change and an increase of numbers.[15] During the military campaigns it is reasonable to think that, while the army is involved in the fight, daily dispatches continuously bring new information to the king, including updates on the numbers of cities destroyed and conquered, enemies killed and captured, total amount of booty collected, and losses the army might have suffered. While royal inscriptions give the final total amount (either exact or apparently exaggerated), letters go into the details of the progression of numbers and this is also true for the composition of the army with the quantity of soldiers for each unit: in particular, letters describe the quantity of soldiers that are physically and effectively present on the spot in front of the officials who are writing the document for the king. This is quite clear in the letter ND 2631 = NL 89:[16] in fact, the writer, after giving the total of the king's men (1,430), clarifies that the rest of the troops – it is impossible to know the quantity of this remainder – is delayed but on its way with the major-domo.[17]

The chronology of numbers gives the sequence of events and can explain the changes we encounter in the sources: this seems quite reasonable and normal when letters are taken into consideration. Because of the temporary nature of the information they deliver, it is obvious that numbers can be corrected and updated (either augmented or diminished) in later messages. In this respect, the simplistic conclusion that numbers have been expressly falsified should be denied or at least revaluated: as rightly pointed out by De Odorico, "as for the 'corrections' (that is alterations) at the level of digits, […] we saw that in most cases they are probably due to oversights or copying errors and not to the intention of inflating the numbers".[18] It seems that we tend to give simplistic and quick interpretations to the mechanisms of how ancient people dealt with numbers, in particular when numbers refer to military events that boost the glory of the winners. This situation often occurs with the Assyrians because their imperial attitude is judged to convey a forced view and representation of the reality by

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15 De Odorico, 1995: 76, 173.

16 SAA V 215; Saggs, 2001: 128–130. For comments and studies of the document, see also Fales, 1990 and Postgate, 2000.

17 Fales, 1990: 33.

18 De Odorico, 1995: 119.

the use of propaganda. Exaggerated and high numbers would then be the result of an alteration of the reality: this idea has also been applied when, on the contrary, sources minimize numbers, as it happens in the Letter to the God Ashur by the king of Sargon II where the loss of the Assyrian army is schematically and laconically reported as follows: "1 charioteer, 2 horsemen and 3 infantrymen were killed".[19]

The idea of propaganda in Assyrian sources has largely influenced the way scholars approached Assyrian documents;[20] more recently, that propagandistic vision has been attenuated or at least reconsidered in the light of new ways of studying the Assyrian written and visual evidence (taking for example into account the nature of the ancient audience and its role).[21] Can numbers in warfare be a proof of Assyrian propaganda? Did the Assyrians rely upon numbers to build their power and control over territories and people? I think we cannot totally deny the possibility that Assyrian scribes and officials used numbers to describe a situation that indeed did not perfectly correspond to reality; rather, numbers were specifically used to create an invented reality, actually something similar to nowadays in the law of market economy, economic growth, and outcomes of wars and polls. At the same time, however, the claim to the use of propaganda has been extensively used to explain and justify every discrepancy in the numbers provided by the Assyrians in their sources. It must be pointed out that, in spite of the various written sources of the Assyrian period, we still lack part of the ancient documentation and, more importantly, we do not have enough (actually we do not have any at all in some instances) non-Assyrian sources that can balance the information and facts from the Assyrian point of view.

Looking at the majority of written texts in ancient Mesopotamia, it can be observed that numbers are the most important if not the main topic and content of texts; the first examples of cuneiform texts are administrative documents and writing had a special use and function in registering and managing the administration of the ancient Mesopotamian cities;[22] finally,

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[19] Translation by Fales, 2017. For another recent edition and translation of the letter, see Foster, 2005: 790–813. For comments on the composition of the text, see Fales, 1991.

[20] Garelli, 1979; Liverani, 1979; Reade, 1979.

[21] Tadmor, 1997; Liverani, 2010; Sano, 2016.

[22] As shown by the long lasting tradition (already attested in the archaic cuneiform documents) of filling out lexical lists of people, objects, professions, and words. For an overview of the history of lexical cuneiform lists in ancient Mesopotamia, see Veldhuis, 2014.

it can even be asserted that writing was invented to serve that purpose. The function of writing, at least for an administrative use, was to record and register numbers of people (professions), animals, and things, in order to have the exact situation of people and goods at the disposal of the temple, palace, and city in general: if so, it seems there was no need to invent numbers as totals were calculated to mirror the reality rather than to envisage sums of employees of the state. Invention and exaggeration in the calculation of the administration of an institution would sound extremely illogical. It is however true that the real intention of even the administrative documents can escape us: exaggeration of numbers might in fact reflect the ideal an institution aspires to.

However, when referring to the Assyrians, the idea of propaganda heavily affected the analysis of numbers, since it has been principally based on the existence of hyperbolic numbers (numbers of soldiers, numbers of captives, enemies killed, booty) and the nonexistence of any problem faced by the Assyrians in war: Assyrian bas-reliefs represent no Assyrian soldier dead or suffering at the hands of his enemy. Even when written sources refer to the loss of the Assyrian army, numbers of dead soldiers are so limited and scanty that they sound unreal if compared to the huge numbers of troops. So, the letter to the god Ashur by Sargon II on his eight military campaign simply reports that "1 charioteer, 2 horsemen and 3 infantrymen were killed": 6 soldiers dead from an army totalling thousands. Indeed, the relationship between the number of men and number of dead soldiers is unbalanced: it appears that scribes, in a special literary work such as the letter to the god Ashur, used a coded phraseology where the reference to the dead men of the Assyrian army was simply instrumental and generic.[23] Since the letter was probably read publicly, Mario Liverani asks whether "families, whose sons had not come back home from the expedition, […] perhaps imagined that their own missing person was one of the few mentioned by the king":[24] the nature of the document must be taken into consideration and the use of such wording

[23] On the coded phraseology of the letter that shows the skilful use of rhetoric with variances in motif, see Fales, 1991. That the reference to dead soldiers in the ratio 3–2–1 might correspond to a stylistic "way of saying" rather than to a mystification of the numbers of casualties seems to be proved by the later incomplete draft for Esarhaddon's letter to Ashur that records exactly the same amount of losses (Postgate, 2000: 105, n. 86; Fales, 2017: 215).

[24] Liverani, 2010: 230. See also Foster, 2005: 812, n. 2 and lastly Fales, 2017: 215.

with the mention of only six dead Assyrian army soldiers was therefore part of a common ceremonial idiom.

Although distant in time, it might be interesting to compare the registration of the casualties of the Assyrian army with some documents of the third millennium BC from Ebla, in Syria, that deal with the registration of dead soldiers: the nature of the texts from Ebla is totally different from the Assyrian letter to Ashur. They are in fact purely administrative texts: in particular, three interesting texts related to the wars waged by Ebla report the loss of the Eblaite army;[25] text TM.75.G.1698 from the great main archive L.2769 registers the loss of 20,309 men, a huge amount that must necessarily make us reflect on the composition and size of the army of Ebla in the third millennium BC.[26] Due to the administrative function of the texts of Ebla, the number of dead soldiers must be considered true, as it would be illogical to register an invented so high number of losses of its own army for celebratory purposes.

The content of the Assyrian and Eblaite texts is similar (at least concerning the reference to the losses of the army), but the context is completely different. Going through the points previously quoted:

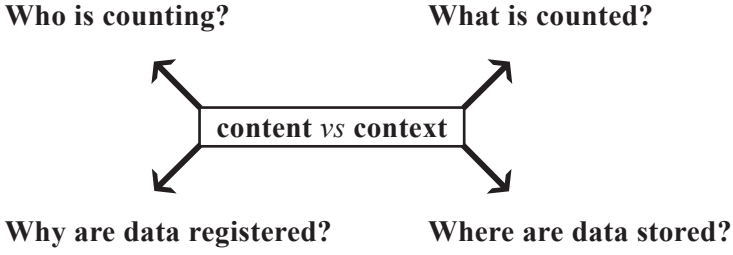
1) Who is counting? Assyrians (or the Assyrian king), on the one hand, and the scribes of the Ebla administration, on the other.
2) What is counted? Both are registering the losses of their own army.
3) Why are they registering this kind of data? The Assyrian scribes probably used a coded poetic language; the importance was the reference to the losses rather than the reality of numbers (the real deaths the Assyrian army suffered); Eblaite administration carefully registered all data about the military campaign and the deaths of soldiers was part of the information that did not need to be hidden nor falsified.
4) Where was the information stored? The context of use of the documents marks the difference and therefore implies a different audience: Ebla texts have been found in the Royal Palace and were therefore official documents stored in the palace archives;[27] the data were then used to draw up a final account at the end of the military

[25] Archi, 2009: 29–32.

[26] Based in fact on the numbers of losses registered in these texts, Archi suggests that the army of Ebla might have been made of a total of at least 44,000 men (2009: 33).

[27] Matthiae, 1986; 2008: 63–77.

campaign confronting the numbers of outcomes, incomes, victories, and losses; as the army of Ebla was made of Eblaite soldiers and men supplied by the allied cities,[28] the account of losses was probably used to administrate the relationships with allies. Documents with the registration of the numbers of the losses were read and used by internal scribes and officials and information was also shared with the partners of Ebla; moreover, the information was also fundamental to reorganizing the army with a new levy and request of soldiers for future campaigns. On the contrary, the letter to the god Ashur was a very special literary work that was not used for administrative purposes: it was a direct dialogue and speech of the Assyrian king with the national god Ashur and information was therefore carefully chosen. The letter was also presented to the people of the city Ashur who could therefore witness the special relationship between the god Ashur and the Assyrian king; therefore, the outcomes of Sargon's military campaign against Urartu were also shared with the citizens of Ashur and all of the city was called to feel part of a larger Assyrian community that also remembered those who died in the battle. The idea that the letter was read aloud is only conjectural, but the choice of writing a letter seems to point to the importance of a direct communication between the king and the national god and between the king and his people. Finally, the reference to the loss of 6 soldiers could be true, partially true, or even false: this means that the Assyrian army might have lost more than 6 men or it did not suffer any losses at all: the content was instrumental for the special use of the document and the context when the letter was recited, publicly or not.



[28] On the composition and levy of men in the army of Ebla, see Biga, 2008: 325–326; Archi, 2009: 20–27.

Conclusion

Scholars have usually labelled the use of numbers in Assyrian sources as suspicious, explaining discrepancies and alterations by appealing to the deceptive Assyrian propaganda and emphasizing the real meaning of digits in the inscriptions. Recent studies proved that a careful analysis of numbers (putting together the information of the daily sources of the letter and the official royal inscriptions)[29] shows that the high numbers claimed by the Assyrian kings are not so unreal or distant from the evaluation we can make;[30] surely, it depends on how we evaluate those numbers, and on

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[29] See for example the studies by Fales, 1990; see also the study by Dezsö (2006b) who pointed out the importance of the pictorial evidence, going beyond the idea that Assyrian bas-reliefs are too schematic and repetitive to show aspects of real Assyrian daily life. In particular, Dezsö analyses the pictorial evidence from the reign of Sargon II: together with the written evidence (so, not in opposition), sculptures can eventually reveal interesting aspects of how the army appears (the physical representation of the quantities of soldiers, the types of weapons, amour, machines,) as well as the situation (open field battle or siege) where the army operates. In this respect, Dezsö rightly observes: "the military scenes on the sculptures, however, give a lot of information which is missing from the cuneiform sources" (2006b: 89). It is not a question of establishing a classification of importance, but rather of integrating data: in this respect, although indirectly, representations of the Assyrian army and wars also refer to numbers, with the depiction of ranks of soldiers, rows of prisoners, and the objects of booty pillaged.

[30] For Sargon's army, see Dalley / Postgate, 1984: 28–47 and Dezsö, 2006a. The number of 120,000 men given by Shalmaneser III during his 14th campaign against the Syrian coalition has for example always been targeted as suspicious and unrealistic: that is 120,000 men is really a too-high and exaggerated number; however, the digit could in fact be interpreted as a round high number used by the Assyrian scribes to comprehend the totality of the soldiers the Assyrian army could have had. As said by De Odorico (1995: 111), "the number may have represented the theoretical or conventional size of the Assyrian army". In this respect, the datum of 120,000 is not properly a wrong number: it refers to the highest possible size of the Assyrian army rather than to the real number of forces on the battlefield in Shalmaneser's 14th campaign (Liverani, 2004: 215–216; Fales, 2010: 98). Taking into consideration another source of Shalmaneser III that gives the amount of cavalrymen (5,242) and chariots (2,001 = 6,003 men if we consider that each chariot carries up to three soldiers), Fales integrates the missing number of infantrymen (78,630): he concludes that the total men of Shalmaneser's army would encompass about 90,000 soldiers that "ce n'est pas au fond pas si éloigné du chiffre de 120,000 évoqué plus haut" (Fales, 2010: 99). In conclusion, 120,000 men does not represent the total of the forces employed by Shalmaneser in the battle of Qarqar in 853 BC: it is a theoretical number that encompasses the standing army and the additional

what we want to read in those accounts. At the same time, and conversely, we should first consider which message the Assyrian king wanted to convey and to whom this message was principally and specifically addressed.

Although data on Assyrian numbers are quite numerous, we are still missing part of the documents (i.e. they have not yet been found) and we should also take into account the possibility that some texts might have been purposely destroyed. Once numbers were registered in the final accounts, temporary notes were discarded; so royal inscriptions and the different versions of the annals contained revised (increased or decreased) numbers that were the result of the recounting of notes and the integration of new information. In the end, internal and external numbers can be appropriately distinguished: on one hand, there were numbers that were used by the administration and the official of the state only; while on the other, there were numbers that could be (or even had to be) communicated outward. In this process of external communication, propaganda might have played a role, but it does not completely explain the way that the Assyrians dealt with the numbers in their documents related to warfare: surely, some numbers might have been adapted and suitably changed.

How is it possible to state that numbers have been modified from one inscription to another? Indeed, the Assyrians themselves left the traces of their changes because they did not cancel the previous versions of royal inscriptions that reported the different numbers for the same event: if their propaganda was so efficient, how is it possible that they failed in this? Maybe what modern scholars labelled as propaganda was on the contrary the demonstration of the Assyrian king, in front the gods and his people, that he was able to rule even the numbers; on the other hand, this situation more plausibly describes a complex reality where numbers were sometimes given in round and high totals and were then recalculated on the basis of new incoming data.

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men supplied by Assyrian allies. The Assyrian standing army (*kiṣir šarrūti*) during the Sargonid time probably had 35,000 men: other units were then added arriving at a total of 100,000 men at most (forming up the *ṣāb šarri*, the king's troops) (Henshaw, 1969: 3–5; De Odorico, 1995: 111; Postgate, 2000: 107; Fales, 2010: 140–141). At the same time, if we consider the special occasion (Shalmaneser's 14th campaign, Liverani, 2004: 215) for such a high levy, maybe the number does not sound so illogical and unrealistic: actually, if Archi's assumption is correct (2009: 33), Ebla had an army of about 40,000 men in the third millennium BC!

Numbers, however, were not only recorded in written sources: what happened when numbers needed to be represented? How were the written numbers of cuneiform sources translated into the visual numbers of pictures?[31] It seems that pictures of soldiers and enemies on the Assyrian bas-reliefs in the rooms of the royal palaces work to multiply the presence and the quantity of people. Again, the analytical points (who, what, why, and where) are also valid for pictures: who is depicting numbers? What numbers are depicted? Why are numbers depicted? And finally, where were numbers displayed? It is true that no bas-relief shows an Assyrian soldier dying, so are we still deceived by propaganda? I think that the perspective we use to look at the Assyrian bas-reliefs nowadays is misleading: indeed, we mostly rely upon photos of pictures and enlarged photos of the reliefs that show even the smallest details.[32] In this way, we dismiss the general view of the sculptures and the context in which they were placed and displayed. Can we really say that Assyrian pictures were 'displayed'? Ancient Assyrian palaces were not museums. Sculptures surely celebrated the deeds of the Assyrian kings, but they were not works of art to be contemplated, at least not in our contemporary understanding. I think that looking from a distance at the long rows of soldiers, represented two by two so as to multiply the length of the formation, and the long processions of prisoners, sometimes on several registers, really gave the effect of abundance;[33] conversely, in the close-up of the couple of counting scribes,[34] the abundance or what we could label as the visual rhetoric of numbers can be precisely perceived in the obsessive registration of the booty (prisoners, objects, severed heads). So the multiplication of figures, one next to the other and one after the other, was not a simple way to fill the gap and to compulsively occupy the entire surface of the slabs (thus reducing some pictures to simple filling motifs); nor it was a mechanical copy and paste of a model to render the numbers visually.

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[31] If they were translated into pictures: Assyrian bas-reliefs are in a certain way a re-interpretation of the data that pass through a process of selection of what must/must not and can/cannot be represented (Nadali, 2016).

[32] On the visual effect of distortion and alteration of the perception as caused by photography, specifically detailed photos of partial portions of the bas-reliefs, see Winter, 2000: 51–54.

[33] Bagg, 2016: 66.

[34] If they are both scribes: see Madhloom, 1970: 121–122; Reade, 2012.

If the numbers of the Assyrian state (the soldiers of the army, the officials and members of the court, the prisoners, the booty, and the cities conquered) had also to be expressed visually, this choice probably depended on the intentional creation of "the visual rhetoric of abundance",[35] a communicative process and strategy that envisaged the centrality of the Assyrian king as the focal element that generates, attracts, and rules high numbers and quantities.

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[35] Winter, 2002.

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Numbers in Herodotus*

Reinhold Bichler

I Gigantic Numbers and the Persians' Claim to Global Dominance

I 1)

It is well known that Herodotus embellished his presentation of the Persian Wars with huge troop numbers, which are to be understood rather as poetic metaphors for impressive size than as empirical data which allow us to reconstruct the actual numbers.[1] Xerxes' army, for instance, driven under the whip, takes a full seven days and nights to cross the boat bridge at the Hellespont.[2] On the march towards Hellas, it drinks up smaller rivers and lakes[3] and consumes the food provisions of several towns.[4] It is an army whose strength defies imagination. The following data may illustrate this point.

674 (= 314 + 360) ships served to construct a double bridge across the Hellespont.[5] The total number of triremes came to 1,207.[6] 3,000 triaconters, penteconters, light boats, and horse-transporters served as

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* I would like to thank the organising team of the conference for offering me the opportunity to present here observations on Herodotus' military strength figures – which I have already published in different form – in a systematic and condensed compilation. Esp. cf. Bichler, 2007: 76–78; Bichler, 2016: 15–20. This paper was translated by Franz Pramhaas.

1 Compare on this the classic of factual criticism: Delbrück, 1920/1960: 7–106. Rubincam, 2008: 97, generally highlights the "significant differences in numeric mentality between the twenty-first-century western world and the world of ancient Greece".

2 Hdt. 7.56.

3 Hdt. 7.108–109, 127, 196.

4 Hdt. 7.118–120.

5 Hdt. 7.36.

6 Hdt. 7.89.1.

supplying forces.[7] The land army included 1,700,000 infantry, 80,000 cavalry, 20,000 camel riders and charioteers coming from Asia, plus 300,000 allies from Europe. [8] In Herodotus' calculation the total number of men serving in Xerxes' military forces came to 5,283,220.[9]

> "… no one could calculate the precise number of those others who followed along – the women who prepared the food, the concubines, the eunuchs, or of the yoke animals and other beasts of burden and the Indian dogs; indeed the number of all these was so great that no one could possibly express it".[10]

In Herodotus' view, such an enormous force was not only intended to achieve a realistic war objective, namely to gain control of the hegemonic powers in Hellas and their allies in the whole of the Aegean, but to subject the world to the rule of the Great King.

The aspiration to global dominance over space was an essential aspect of Persian royal ideology. But caution should be exercised with the interpretation of 'Persian imperialism'.[11] From an opponent's perspective, this claim to dominance could easily be taken quite literally and, therefore, be critically rejected. Consequently, Herodotus highlights the failure of the Persian kings' plans of conquest. Cyrus suffers a fatal defeat in the war against the Massagetae in the far north-east.[12] Darius emerges relatively unscathed from his expedition against the Scythians in the north-west.[13] By crossing the Araxes and the Ister, respectively, both had made a fatal mistake. Cambyses' plans to subdue the Ethiopians living by the southern sea and the Ammonians and Carthaginians in the south-west exceed all bounds and end in disaster.[14] Xerxes reaches the height of presumptuousness when he lays claim to ruling over all the countries the sun shines on.[15] His general Mardonius, too, falls prey to hubris. The colossal numbers of

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7 Hdt. 7.97.

8 Hdt. 7.184–185.

9 Hdt. 7.184–186.

10 Hdt. 7.187.1. Translations have been taken from the Landmark Herodotus (= Strassler, 2007).

11 Cf. Wiesehöfer, 2007; Kuhrt, 2007/2010: 469–575; Jacobs / Trampedach, 2013; Dan, 2013; Rollinger / Ruffing 2013; Rollinger, 2013; Rollinger, 2014; Harrison, 2015.

12 Hdt. 1.201–214.

13 Esp. cf. Hdt. 4.131–142.

14 Hdt. 3.17–26.

15 Hdt. 7.8β–γ; cf. 7.53.2.

troops mentioned above already foreshadow the debacle to come.[16] The description of Xerxes' hypertrophic array of troops is the culmination in a whole series of lists which Herodotus uses to illustrate the military potential the rulers of the 'Orient' have at their disposal.

I 2)

Within the main line of Herodotus' narrative, the Asian kings' gradual gain of power is illustrated by a series of catalogues presenting the subjugated tribes and peoples.[17] Thus, Herodotus lists fourteen peoples on this side of the Halys which were under Croesus' rule at the height of his power and six tribes [γένεα] which were united by the Median Deioces.[18] Then he names a total of ten Persian nations which Cyrus sought to win over for the fight against the Medes.[19] This catalogue is presented at the beginning of the deeds of conquests which resulted in the establishment of the empire. The fact that Cambyses, as a consequence of his father's conquests, also carried with him Ionian and Aeolian subjects on his Egyptian campaign is stated even twice by Herodotus.[20] The catalogue of Darius' tax districts finally concludes the history of his rise to power and reflects the full scope of his reign.[21] When his narrative arrives at the Ionian Revolt, Herodotus provides a memorable episode:

> "Everyone but Hekataios the author declared their opinions in favour of a revolt; Hecataeus, however, advised them not to take upon themselves a war with the King of Persia and reminded them of Darius' great power, reciting a list of all the peoples under his rule".[22]

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[16] Xerxes has the strength of his army and navy accurately registered; cf. Hdt. 7.59; 104. The successful outcome of his campaign is a foregone conclusion. To J. Grethlein, Herodotus' portrayal of the Great King is a paradigm of inadequate historical representation; Grethlein, 2011: esp. 113–118.

[17] The ethnic groups and cities of the Persian Empire were first systematically treated about the time of the Ionian Revolt in Hecataeus of Miletus' work on geography (*periodos ges*), the original of which is lost; see on Hecataeus below. – The introductory scene of Aeschylus' *Persai*, performed in 472 BC, still starts with a list of warriors and commanders of Xerxes' army. The soldiers had been recruited from all over the empire (1–92).

[18] Hdt. 1.28, 101.

[19] Hdt. 1.125.

[20] Hdt. 2.1.2; 3.1.

[21] Hdt. 3.89–96. On the critical impact of Herodotus' catalogue cf. Ruffing, 2009.

[22] οἱ μὲν δὴ ἄλλοι πάντες γνώμην κατὰ τὠυτὸ ἐξεφέροντο, κελεύοντες ἀπίστασθαι, Ἑκαταῖος δ' ὁ λογοποιὸς πρῶτα μὲν οὐκ ἔα πόλεμον βασιλέϊ τῷ Περσέων ἀναιρέεσθαι,

The episode in which Hecataeus is acknowledged as a warning voice about the risks involved in the Ionian Revolt is located at a turning point in the narrative structure of the *Histories*.[23] By paying homage to Hecataeus' warning on the eve of the Ionian Revolt, Herodotus also recalls his own catalogue.[24] Positioned prominently, the catalogue of Xerxes' troops and fleet will then visualise the impression that all the empire has prepared for war against the confederated Hellenes also in geographical terms.[25] To what extent they are based, in their essence, on Persian sources is uncertain and controversial.[26]

Herodotus also uses catalogues of cities, rivers and peoples to depict the routes of Xerxes' invasion forces across Thrace and Macedonia. Additionally, they complete an earlier description of Thrace which had already been supplied in the context of Darius' campaigns.[27] In the further course of the campaign, the catalogues providing primarily topographic-ethnographic information are complemented by various registers of communities and peoples that were involved in the hostilities on the part of the Persians or the defending alliance, or even kept aloof.[28] The universal dimension of the threat which – as outlined in Herodotus' scenario – was posed to the Hellenes in the West by the army of the Carthaginian Amilcas is illustrated, too, by a catalogue of the combatants.[29]

I 3)

However, the impression evoked by Xerxes' gigantic force is significantly weakened on closer inspection of the *relationship* between the various numerical data Herodotus supplies on the Persian troops and those on the Hellenic side. This relationship, in fact, no longer proves to be so out of touch with reality as a first glance might suggest when it comes to the

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καταλέγων τά τε ἔθνεα πάντα τῶν ἦρχε Δαρεῖος καὶ τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ; Hdt. 5.36.2.

[23] Cf. West, 1991: esp. 154–157.

[24] Cf. Armayor, 2004.

[25] Hdt. 7.61–99.

[26] Cf. West, 2011: esp. 263–265, with further references. On the possibilities of identifying the different peoples listed in the two catalogues with the ones mentioned in the Persian texts see Asheri, 2007: 481–496 and 538–541; Kuhrt, 2007/2010: 527–529.

[27] Hdt. 4.89–99; 5.1–16.

[28] Cf., for example, Hdt. 7.110, 122–123, 132.

[29] Hdt. 7.165. Cf. below.

actual confrontation.[30] The data compiled in the appendix on the relative strengths prior to the five important battles corroborates this. According to it, Persian numerical superiority in the naval battles at Lade and Salamis amounted to a ratio of somewhat less than 2:1 and in the battle at Cape Artemisium to not much more than 2:1. As for the Battle of Plataea, the superiority of the Persians is calculated to be somewhat less than 3:1. The picture is similar for the fleet sizes before the battle at Mycale, from which rough conclusions could be drawn for the battle then fought on land.

Herodotus is not only skilled at using his numerical data to evoke a fascinating impression of size and power but also to reduce this size – as if by magic. Two striking examples may illustrate that. The details can again be found in the appendix. Adopting the number of ships given in Aeschylus and, in turn, Homer's *Iliad*, Herodotus has a fleet of 1,207 warships sail for Hellas.[31] Even before the first naval battle is fought at Cape Artemisium, however, a combined effect of divine powers and the forces of nature has destroyed roughly 600 warships, together with a number of transport ships, reducing the enemy fleet to about half its original size.[32]

According to Herodotus, Xerxes' land army, on the other hand, comprised 1,700,000 infantry.[33] Until the fights at Thermopylae, this army did not suffer any combat-related losses. The loss of up to 20,000 dead at Thermopylae was about compensated for by other allies.[34] When Xerxes, after the battle at Salamis, retreated with the bulk of his army, leaving Mardonius in Hellas with 300,000 men,[35] he would, in terms of figures, still have had about 1,400,000 men at his command. Though Herodotus does not record any major hostilities on the return route, he creates the impression of a beaten army and – in Aeschylus' tradition – paints a picture of chaotic flight, disease and starvation.[36] In a narratively ingenious way he makes it look as if the gigantic army crumbled away in panic and misery, without a decisive battle, so that what Xerxes brought

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30 Cf. generally on Herodotus' catalogues of battle ships Keyser, 2006, 346: "Criticizing Herodotus' facts should not entail mistaking his position – he aims to give a consistent account that his readers can verify."

31 Aesch. Pers. 341–343; Hdt. 7.89.

32 Hdt. 7.190; 8.7, 13.

33 Hdt. 7.184.4.

34 Cf. Hdt. 8.24, 66.

35 Cf. Hdt. 8.100, 113, 115.

36 Esp. cf. Hdt. 8.115–117.

back of his entire force is practically nothing: "Xerxes then left Mardonios in Thessaly […] but did not bring back even a fraction of his army intact, if I can put it that way".[37]

At this point it is worth recalling Darius' expedition against the Scythians, which is portrayed as a richly allusive prelude to the great campaign carried out under Xerxes and Mardonius.[38] It was fortunate for the Great King that it never came to a pitched battle. According to Herodotus, the king himself then led the army of 700,000 men, including cavalry.[39] How this gigantic force wandered about in the vast expanse of the Scythian steppes appears fantastic enough. For the issue in hand, a particular aspect deserves attention. In Herodotus' scenario, the Great King also deployed a fleet of 600 ships to assist the expedition against the Scythians;[40] its practical function, apart from forming a bridge across the Ister, remains absolutely unclear. The number 600 is noteworthy, though. It corresponds to the sum of those 200 and 400 ships which Xerxes' fleet lost in storms, thereby suffering a loss of almost half its original strength. In addition, the 700,000 men in Darius' army make up half of the number of those who, after leaving the 300,000 under the command of Mardonius, followed Xerxes on his retreat, seeking refuge in flight. Their number still amounted to about 1,400,000 men.[41]

Can these eye-catching similarities be a mere coincidence or are they the result of a deliberate choice? Does Herodotus here only wish to demonstrate that the potential threat of Xerxes' hypertrophic enterprise was about twice as dangerous as the likewise hypertrophic venture of his father? Or have these numbers also been selected in order to indicate the different dimensions of the territory threatened by the respective war objectives? This is the key point of the observations and reflections outlined here: the question of the geopolitical significance of Herodotus' military strength figures.

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37 Hdt. 8.115.1.

38 Cf. Bichler, 2000: 292–297.

39 Hdt. 4.87.

40 Hdt. 4.87.1.

41 Cf. above and the appendix.

II Special Numbers and Their 'Geopolitical' Aspect

II 1)

A first example of the geopolitical significance of certain strength figures can be found in Herodotus' data on the two armies which the aggressors are said to have fielded in the land battles at Himera and Plataea. There, in retrospective perception, the fate of Hellas' freedom was decided. The battle at Himera was not an event directly related to the policy of the Achaemenids, though, even if from a later perspective – first attested in Ephorus – it was presented in that way.[42] Herodotus was still aware of that. But he seized on the idea already attested in Pindar to link the historic significance of this battle to the defensive successes in the Persian Wars. Pindar himself had acknowledged to Hieron, tyrant of Syracuse, that he, too, delivered Hellas from heavy servitude, thereby setting his achievements at Cumae and Himera on a level with the already legendary Hellenic victories at Salamis and Plataea.[43] Thus, a land battle and a battle at sea in the Greek West and in the motherland were each juxtaposed with each other on an equal footing.

In a consistent way, Herodotus underlines the Persians' claim to dominance over land *and* sea. They led all the military expeditions mentioned in this survey using land forces and a fleet.[44] By establishing a synchronism between the land battle at Himera and the Battle of Salamis,[45] Herodotus succeeds in embedding Himera within a solid structure of battle synchronisms that underscores the threat to Hellas' freedom on land and at sea. These synchronisms also involve the battles at Cape Artemisium and at Thermopylae as well as at Plataea and Mycale.[46] But Herodotus found yet another way to illustrate the equivalent threat to Hellas' freedom in the Greek West and mainland Greece. It is his numerical data.

Herodotus calculates the number of barbarian troops at roughly 300,000 men, plus, in fact, another 50,000 Greek allies in the battle at Plataea. However, since the 40,000 Persians under the command of Artabazus kept

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42 Cf. Bichler, 1985/2007.

43 Pind. Pyth. I 75–80.

44 Cf. also the bridge of boats in Cyrus' campaign against the Massagetae; Hdt. 1.205.2; Hackl, 2014, 55–56; 345–346.

45 Hdt. 7.166.

46 Hdt. 8.15.1; 9.100.2, 101.2.

aloof from the fight in the battle at Plataea, the balance is almost equal.[47] The effect of making us see the threat to the West as equivalent to the endangerment in the motherland, thereby raising the victories here and there to the same level of importance, is even enhanced by the combination of troop numbers and the catalogues of combatants.[48] By listing Amilcas' troops, Herodotus skilfully creates the impression that the 'barbarians' settling around the western Mediterranean had gathered unanimously to launch an attack on Hellas.[49]

Résumé: There is equivalence in the calculation of the forces threatening the freedom of 'Hellas' in Greece and in Sicily on the one hand and the military capacity of the defenders on the other. While a synchronism links Salamis with the battle at Himera, the number of the enemy troops involved – 300,000 – equalises the importance attached to the decisive battles at Himera and Plataea.

II 2)

Let us return again to the 600 ships in Darius' expedition against the Scythians. They very obviously correspond with the calculation Herodotus gives for the fleet sizes in two other naval operations which the Great King had carried out against a Greek fleet: 600 warships were deployed by the Persians and their vassals – Phoenicians, Cypriots, Egyptians, Cilicians – for the decisive battle at Lade in the course of the Ionian Revolt,[50] and the same number of ships were led against Hellas and the Aegean Islands by Datis and Artaphrenes four years later.[51] Whereas the first-mentioned enterprise against 353 ships of the Ionians and the Aeolians ended victoriously for the Great King,[52] the latter resulted in the debacle at Marathon, which cost the lives of 6,400 men of the Persian land army which had been transported by the fleet.[53] Misjudgement of the opponent played

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47 Cf. appendix.

48 Catalogue of Amilcas' army: Hdt. 7.165; Mardonius' army at Plataea: 8.113; 9.31–32; the forces of the Greeks at Plataea: 9. 28–30.

49 Cf. Hdt. 7.165: "[…] an army of 300,000 Phoenicians, Libyans, Iberians, Ligyes, Elisikians, and Kyrnians (Corsicans) […]".

50 Hdt. 6.9.

51 Hdt. 6.95.

52 Hdt. 6.8.

53 Hdt. 6.95, 117.

a major role in the outcome there. It should be noted that in Herodotus' scenario this venture aimed at more than revenge for participation in the Ionian Revolt. Taking vengeance on Eretria and Athens was only a pretext [πρόφασις] – "Darius himself wanted to seize this pretext to subjugate all those Hellenes who had refused to give him earth and water".[54]

Now, there is yet another parallelism based on the number 600 between Darius' failed campaign against the Scythians and the undertaking Datis and Artaphrenes carried out against – according to Herodotus – all Hellas. Apart from Darius' huge number of troops, the assessment of the Scythians' military potential also includes the anecdote about King Ariantes' population count. He ordered the Scythians, man for man, to hand in an arrowhead each and had the melted-down mass made into a huge mixing-bowl which held the contents of 600 amphoras.[55] This would not be noteworthy in itself were it not for the account about the Lydian king Croesus' good relationships with the Hellenes: Before Croesus tried to find allies in Hellas, thinking of Athenians and Spartans, he had sent presents to Delphi, for instance a silver bowl; it held 600 amphoras.[56]

Résumé: There is equivalence in the calculation of the forces menacing the freedom of the Scythians and the freedom of 'Hellas' on the one hand, and of the military capacity of the defenders on the other. The number 600 is significant in underlining this 'geopolitical' aspect.

II 3)

In Herodotus' *Histories*, a corresponding 'geopolitical' significance is also assigned to half the numerical value of 600. When the Lydian Croesus – reportedly – concluded a treaty of alliance with Sparta, the Lacedaemonians sealed the pact by making a bronze mixing-bowl holding 300 amphoras.[57] While the 'document' disappeared on its way to its destination at Sardis,[58] the story suffices to suggest that Sparta's military strength accounted for half of the potential held by the two hegemonic powers of Hellas. When, therefore, King Demaratos, who had been banned from Sparta, right after the breakthrough at Thermopylae (and at Artemisium) advises

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[54] Hdt. 6.94; cf. 6.48–49.1.

[55] Hdt. 4.81. On the famous cauldron cf. West, 2000.

[56] Hdt. 1.51.

[57] Hdt. 1.70.1.

[58] Hdt. 1.70.2–3; 3.47.

his protector Xerxes to send 300 ships to the Peloponnese to occupy the island of Cythera and to attack the Lacedaemonians in their homeland,[59] the number 300 seems absolutely consistent. Not least, it is reminiscent of the 300 Spartiates who, together with Leonidas, died fighting heroically at Thermopylae. It should also be recalled that during winter 480/479 BC, i.e. before the battle off Mycale, 300 Persian ships were stationed off Samos.[60] The Greek naval forces then fought – on the mainland – under the Spartan king Leotychidas.[61]

The number 300, however, is not only associated with Sparta's glory.[62] In his campaign in 492 BC, Mardonius lost 300 ships and 20,000 men off Mount Athos.[63] The objective of this venture is a matter of controversy. In Herodotus' conception, the real aim of the campaign was highly ambitious: "Eretria and Athens … were the professed goals [πρόσχημα] of the expedition, but what the Persians really intended [ἐν νόῳ ἔχοντες] was to subjugate as many Greek cities as they could".[64] It is true that in Herodotus' view the 600 ships under Datis and Artaphrenes mentioned above were not exclusively directed against Eretria and Athens either, but against all of Hellas. The fleet with which Mardonius had presumably been assigned to prepare and secure the deployment zone two years before must, however, quite justifiably be imagined on a smaller scale. At any rate, it is hardly by coincidence that Herodotus uses the numbers 600 and 300 to adjust the two undertakings in their relations with each other. It is quite fitting that in 490 BC, before attacking Athens and Eretria, Datis burned 300 talents of frankincense as an offering at Delos.[65]

The fact that the number 300 is also of relevance in the context of the Persian attack on Athens implies that the number 600 can metaphorically be seen as the entirety of the defenders of Hellas' freedom in the Persian Wars and that the number 300, as one half of them, could stand for one of the two hegemonies so tragically involved in rivalry at Herodotus' time.

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[59] Hdt. 7.234–235.
[60] Hdt. 8.130.2.
[61] Hdt. 9.96–105.
[62] Cf. Ruffing, 2013.
[63] Hdt. 6.44.3.
[64] Hdt. 6.43.4–44.1.
[65] Hdt. 6.97.

Résumé: As regards the defenders of 'the freedom of Hellas', the military capacity of their leading forces, Athenians and Spartans, seems to be equal. The number 300 is more than a mere symbol of the Spartan elite.

III Outlook

III 1)

The first two chapters of this paper summarise the observations on troop numbers in Herodotus which I presented at the conference. The following considerations are an attempt to address further questions arising from the discussion after my presentation.[66] Let us begin by focusing on the issue whether Herodotus' strength figures for the Achaemenid army could derive from Persian sources. Thomas Kelly, for instance, took the view that the Persian side had used such gigantic numbers in the service of "psychological warfare" as a means of "propaganda" to exert pressure prior to the military confrontation in the Aegean region.[67] In depicting Xerxes' armed forces, Herodotus, and before him also Simonides[68] and Aeschylus[69], had *unknowingly* incorporated such information.[70] I consider both views quite problematic. As stated above, Herodotus, in my opinion, purposefully and consistently undermined the claim to global supremacy as it was advocated in Persian royal ideology, thereby also working with the numbers at issue here. In Achaemenid texts, such gigantic numbers do not occur. The Old Persian royal inscriptions do not give any troop numbers at all. The Babylonian version of the Bisitun inscription lists a series of numbers relating to enemies slain, prisoners taken and nobles executed, but data on the strength of Persian forces does not exist there either.[71] The numbers referred to there are clearly not rounded numbers

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[66] Thanks to Birgit Gufler, Martin Lang, Sean Manning and Robert Rollinger for helpful references.

[67] Kelly, 2003: esp. cf. 198f., 206f., 209–211.

[68] Kelly, 2003: 209f. with reference to the anonymous epigram quoted by Herodotus 7.228.1. See below.

[69] In Aeschylus' *Persae* the gigantic masses of soldiers in Xerxes' host are mostly presented in metaphors; cf., for example, v. 12–13; 87–90. Susa is depopulated [κένανδρον]; v. 119; cf. also v. 548–549, 718, 730, 732. The Egyptian oarsmen are innumerable [ἀνάριθμοι]; v. 40.

[70] Cf. Kelly, 2003, 211: "It is not likely that either Simonides, Aeschylus or Herodotus recognized that he was repeating Persian propaganda …".

[71] Cf. Voigtlander, 1978; cf. also Borger / Hinz in TUAT I 4: 419–450.

but precise-sounding data. In the case of the enemies killed and captured, the figures are in the range of a few hundred to a few thousand but do not exceed the amount of 7,000. Darius boasted that he, together with his troops, had defeated and captured nine rival "liar kings" in nineteen battles within a year (DB 52). It would have been rather counterproductive to suggest a multiple superiority of his own forces by providing fantastic troop numbers and so minimise the challenge he had faced.

We should, however, raise the question of whether such numbers as first occur in Herodotus and then have become an integral part of the picture we have of the Achaemenid military forces do not ultimately indicate – perhaps only vague – knowledge about the former representation of imperial power in Assyria, as was pointed out in the discussion by Giovanni B. Lanfranchi. I must leave an answer to this question to the professional judgement of the Assyriologists.[72] From my own knowledge, I can only point out that, for instance, Shalmaneser III boasted that in his 14th regnal year he had crossed the Euphrates with 120,000 men.[73] It is a number with a poetic-symbolic signal effect,[74] which later on appears again in the *Book of Judges*.[75] A look at the Jewish tradition addressed here could also be of interest when drawing a comparison with the figures given in Herodotus. Let us briefly return to Shalmaneser III once again. In his sixth regnal year, after the Battle of Quarquar, he reportedly took, among others, 2,000 chariots and 10,000 men as booty from King Ahab of Israel.[76] However, what is this as compared to Ahab's success when the Lord stands by his side and in a battle against Ben Hadad 100,000 Arameans are killed in one day?[77] The strength of Ahab's force in this battle is not reported. Previously, he and his 232 + 7,000 men are supposed to have already beaten Ben Hadad and his allies.[78] The Lord's prophecy to Elijah that in the period following Ahab's death he would only leave 7,000 men

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[72] Esp. cf. De Odorico, 1995: 107–112; see also Davide Natali in this volume.

[73] Cf. De Odorico, 1995: 107; Borger in TUAT I 4: 364.

[74] Cf. De Odorico, 1995: 111: "[…] it is clear enough, I think, that an ancient army credited with 120,000 men should be viewed with a little doubt"

[75] Judges 8.10; on Gideon's battle against the Midianites see below.

[76] Cf. Borger in TUAT I 4: 361; Galling, 1968: n. 19. One may doubt if the battle of Quarquar was indeed such a success; cf., for example, Liverani, 2007: 112.

[77] 1Kings 20.29–30.

[78] Esp. cf. 1Kings 20.15: "So Ahab assembled the servants of the district officials. There were two hundred thirty-two of them. Next he assembled the entire Israelite army, seven thousand in total."

alive in Israel[79] clearly shows, however, that this king's huge victory was only an illusory interlude.[80]

The number of 100,000 dead enemies at the height of Ahab's power seems like a distant echo of the heroic early period. High rounded figures are nothing unusual in the depiction of that era. The people of Israel on its march with Moses is roughly estimated to amount to 600,000 men.[81] In the account of the punishment of the Benjamites, the latter raised 26,000 + 700 men; Israel fielded 400,000.[82] – Even higher figures are given to demonstrate the strength of the people at the time of Saul and David. When Saul mustered his troops against the Ammonites, there were 300,000 men from Israel and 30,000 from Judah.[83] – The maximum number is reached when David, against the Lord's will, took a census of Israel's military power. There were 800,000 in Israel and 500,000 in Judah.[84] When the unity of the kingdom broke down and Israel rebelled against Rehoboam, he gathered an army of 180,000 men from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to regain his kingdom.[85] But at that time the Lord did not want a war.

It is not only the large rounded numbers that are of interest when juxtaposing Greek with Jewish historiography, but also specific numbers. It is conspicuous that the figure 10,000 is used quite often.[86] Equally remarkable is a look at the number 600. During his time as a refugee and leader of a small military force, David is regularly supported by

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[79] Cf. 1Kings 19.17–18: "Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu will kill. Whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha will kill. But I have preserved those who remain in Israel, totalling seven thousand – all those whose knees haven't bowed down to Baal and whose mouths haven't kissed him."

[80] Relating to the time after Ahab's death, Mesha, king of Moab, proudly stated that he had conquered the city of Nebo and killed 7,000 men with their women and concubines; cf. Galling, 1968 n. 21.

[81] Exodus 12.37: about 600,000; Exodus 38.26: 603,550; Numbers 1.46: 603,550; Numbers 2.32: 603,550; Numbers 11.21: 600,000; Numbers 26.51: 601,730.

[82] Judges 20.2; 15; 17.

[83] 1Samuel 11.8.

[84] 2Samuel 24.9.

[85] 1Kings 12.21.

[86] Esp. cf. Judges 1.4; 3.29; 4.6 and 10; 7.3; 20.24–25. Cf. also 1Samuel 15.4; 2Kings 13.7; 14.7. – On the "very important role" of the number ten in Herodotus cf. Fehling, 1989: 226–230.

600 (respectively 400 + 200) men,[87] while Saul commands an army of 3,000.[88] Also in his campaign against the numerous Amalekites, David led only 600 men.[89] And even at the time of Absalom's rebellion, all the 600 loyal Gittites marched with King David.[90] – Finally, a particularly interesting passage in the Book of Judges is worth mentioning. Apart from the figure 120,000, which has been briefly referred to above in the context of Shalmaneser's 14th regnal year,[91] the legendary figure of 300 appears, although not in the way of the fighters at Thermopylae.

The setting is Gideon's battle against the Midianites: The Lord gave order to reduce Israel's army of 32,000 men to a number of 10,000, then to a selected group of 300.[92] The enemy, a gigantic mass of men, was thrown into a panic: "When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the Lord caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords".[93] In the end, only 15,000 men survived; 120,000 had been killed.[94] In stark contrast to the Greek tradition of the 300 fighters who sacrificed themselves at Thermopylae, the key aspect here is not the celebration of a heroic defeat but the demonstration that the Lord alone is able to lead his own to victory over vastly superior numbers. It is not extraordinary bravery or discipline that is celebrated here, but the Lord's power; it causes the enemy troops to panic.[95] Nevertheless, or perhaps precisely for this reason, it is of interest to make this comparison with the 300 in ancient classical literature,[96] just

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87 1Samuel 22.2; 23.13; 25.13; 27.2.

88 1Samuel 24.3; 26.2.

89 1Samuel 30.9-10.

90 2Samuel 15.18.

91 Cf. above. – On the number of 120,000 cf. also Jona 4.11: „And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left – and also many animals?"

92 Judges 7.3 and 7–8.

93 Judges 7.15–22; quotation 7.18.

94 Judges 8.10.

95 Cf. the panic sent by the Ark of God: "They found the Philistines in total confusion, striking each other with their swords"; 1Samuel 14.20.

96 Cf. Brown, 1993, esp. 67. He links the "ceremonial military force of 300 men" among the Greek city states to the story of Gideon's victory. Cf. also Brown, 2000, 84. – On the numbers of 300 and 120,000 cf. also Ctesias' rather grotesque version of the battle at Plataea; F 13 (28) Lenfant. On Ctesias' tendencies see below.

as, quite generally, systematic comparison between the two traditions of representing the past, time and again, reveals surprising aspects.[97]

III 2)

Let us get back to the enormous troop numbers in Herodotus. Kurt Raaflaub asked the provocative question why Herodotus (and others) had committed themselves to such fantastic depictions of enemy forces since the absolute unlikelihood of these figures must have been apparent to everybody even slightly familiar with warfare. It should be noted, first of all, that the description of such vast Achaemenid forces was obviously *lege artis*. A few references may suffice here. They show that even an eyewitness directly involved, such as Xenophon in the case of Cunaxa[98], or an experienced military officer, such as Arrian in the presentation of Alexander's battles,[99] did not hesitate to use extremely high numbers when it came to demonstrating the numerical superiority of the Great King's armies. At the same time, a look at the parallel sources reveals how freely authors made use of their troop numbers. This applies to the battle at Cunaxa[100] just as, for instance, Gaugamela.[101] Yet, even the description of an army that was not led by the Great King

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97 Cf. generally Van Seters, 1983; Fahr, 1985; cf. on Herodotus and the Deuteronomistic History Nielsen, 1997; for detailed studies on this subject see Oswald, 2008 and Oswald, 2013.

98 Xenophon, who took part in the Battle of Cunaxa in 401 BC, puts the potential troop strength of the Great King (Artaxerxes II) at 1,200,000 men; about 900,000 had been on the battle field, along with 6,000 cavalry and 150 chariots. On his own side, led by Prince Cyrus, 10,400 Greek hoplites fought alongside 100,000 men and 600 cavalry; Anab. 1.7.12; 8.6; 24.

99 To give just an example: For the decisive battle at Gaugamela in 330 BC, Arrian attributes 1,000,000 foot-soldiers and 40,000 cavalry to the Great King, who were countered by Alexander's only 40,000 infantry and 7,000 cavalry; Anab. 3.8.6; 12.5. – Plutarch, presumably based on Callisthenes, also numbered Darius' force at 1,000,000 troops; Alex. 31.1.

100 Ctesias of Cnidus, who wrote before Xenophon, estimated the Great King's army at 400,000 men; F 22 Lenfant (= Plut., Art. 13.3–4). – In opposition to Herodotus, he had also reduced the total size of Xerxes' forces to 800,000 infantry and 1,000 ships (F 13(27)) and left Mardonius only 120,000 soldiers; F 13(27–28) Lenfant.

101 The authors who follow the so-called Vulgate diminish the size of Darius' army: Diodorus puts it at 800,000 foot-soldiers, but 200,000 cavalry; 12.53.3. Trogus/Justin estimate it at 500,000 infantry and 100,000 cavalry; 11.12.5. According to Curtius, it only numbered 200,000 infantry and 45,000 cavalry; 4.12.13.

himself could provide similarly fantastic numbers.[102] But let us move on to Herodotus.

"There three million foes were once fought right here [μυριάσιν ποτὲ τῇδε τριηκοσίαις ἐμάχοντο] / By four thousand men from the Peloponnese." In this epigram, which Herodotus quotes as the first text of the inscriptions in honour of the fallen at Thermopylae (7.228.1), the enemy forces acquire a proportion that amounts to double that of his own estimate of Xerxes' infantry. To Herodotus, this discrepancy was not worth commenting on. What are things like, however, when the glory of Sparta's legendary acts of heroism is in danger of becoming obtrusive?

In the unfortunately only secondhand textual tradition of Ctesias' portrayal of the fighting at Thermopylae we can see a numbers game that assumes grotesque forms. Ctesias reports that Leonidas' men slew a total of 10,000 + 20,000 + 50,000 opponents at Thermopylae during the first three days of the battle. But all this did not avert their bitter fate. At the same time he does not relate *anything* about the legendary 300 at this point. Instead he has them make an appearance at Plataea.[103] In my view, a subversive tendency can be discerned here, which is one of the characteristics of Ctesias' work[104] but does not stand in isolation.

As concerns Sparta's former rivals in the fight for dominance in Hellas, a fragment by Theopompus is very clear. In it, he chastises the way in which the Athenians boast of their heroic deeds at Marathon although the events had not occurred as presented by them.[105] Let us now return once more to Herodotus. He reports that the Persians lost 6,400 men at Marathon (6.117). Before the battle at Plataea, the Athenians pride themselves on their deeds of glory, among them also the victory at Marathon: "…there we alone of the Hellenes fought the Persians all by ourselves and not only survived such a remarkable endeavour, but won a victory over forty-six nations" (9.27.5). It is remarkable that the figure of 6,400 not only

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[102] Cf., for example, the *vita* of Datames by Nepos: In the field, Datames prevails against an army twenty times the size of his own forces, led by the king's general Autophrodates. The catalogue lists 20,000 cavalrymen + 100,000 infantry + 3,000 slingers + 46,000 (= 8,000 + 10,000 + 5,000 + 10,000 + 5,000 + 3,000 + 2,000 + 3,000) allies, and a lot of *levis armaturae*; Nepos, *Datames* 8.1–2.

[103] Ctesias F 13 (27) Lenfant. On the figure of 300 fighters in Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon see Ruffing, 2013.

[104] Cf. Bichler, 2013/2016; Bichler, 2016 with further references.

[105] FGrHist 115 F 153; cf. Jung, 2006: 165, and the commentary in Gauger / Gauger, 2010: 216.

corresponds to Herodotus' catalogue of Xerxes' land army[106] but also the figure of 46 nations corresponds to twice the number of people/ countries listed in the catalogue of Darius' inscription at Bisitun (DB §6).[107] To my mind, Herodotus may have subtly addressed the Athenians' imperial hubris here. Herodotus' present was marked by war, but it was the war "between the Athenians and the Peloponnesians" (9.73.3; cf. 7.137.1). His audience was also well aware of the great divide between present times and the glorified past. Admittedly, the vast troop numbers form part of the stereotypical depiction of the Achaemenid Empire, which through a long process of reception developed into the paradigm of despotism. However, in the *Histories* we can already perceive this poetically elaborated picture of an alien concept of rule like a dark mirror in which the questionable 'imperial' policies of the powers in Herodotus' contemporary Greece, first and foremost of the Athenians, are becoming visible. As a symbol of 'barbaric' hubris, the gigantic numbers, in my opinion, also warn against an overestimation of one's own capacity and its dire consequences.

Appendix

The Campaigns of Darius and Xerxes in Chronological Order / The 'Facts' given by Herodotus

1) Darius' Campaigns

Before the Ionian Revolt

a) Darius' invasion of Scythia

The King led the army, including its cavalry, and the navy = 700.000 men + 600 ships (IV 87)

b) Aryandes' expedition against Libya

Amasis and Badres led the entire Egyptian force, army and navy– no numbers given (IV 167)

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[106] Cf. Fehling, 1989: 190; Asheri / Vannicelli, 2006: 217: „[…] sarebbe interessante sapere se questa cifra era già divenuta un *topos* retorico al tempo di Erodoto, oppure è il risultato di un conteggio dei contingenti etnici nel catalogo dell'armata terrestre […] di Serse […], oppure, infine, se Erodoto compilò il catalogo tenendo conto della cifra retorica preesistente".

[107] Cf. Bichler, 2000: 351, n. 122 with further references.

The Ionian Revolt
a) Artaphrenes' and Aristagoras' expedition against Naxos
Megabates led 200 ships and a multitude of Persians and their allies (V 32)

b) Battle of Cyprus
The battle was fought on land and sea – no numbers given (V 112)

c) Naval battle off Lade
The barbarian fleet numbered 600 ships (Phoenicians, Cypriots, Egyptians, Cilicians)
The Ionians + Aeolians had 353 triremes (VI 6, 8–9)
Balance of power: 600:353 = less than 2:1

The attack against Hellas
a) Mardonios' campaign in 492 B.C.
300 ships + 20.000 men are lost in the storm off Mount Athos (VI 44)
Mardonios "hurried to the Hellespont, and when a vast fleet as well as a huge land army had gathered there, they crossed the Hellespont on their ships and then proceeded to march through Europe, advancing toward Eretria and Athens. Those two cities were the professed goals [πρόσχημα] *of the expedition, but what the Persians really intended* [ἐν νόῳ ἔχοντες] *was to subjugate as many Greek cities as they could" VI 43.4–44.1)*

b) Datis' campaign in 490 B.C.
Datis and Artaphrenes led 600 triremes and a huge land army (VI 95)
Taking vengeance on Eretria and Athens was only a pretext [πρόφασις] – *"Darius himself wanted to seize this pretext to subjugate all those Hellenes who had refused to give him earth and water"* (6.94; cf. 6.48–49.1)
The Persians lost 6400 men at Marathon (VI 117) – The Athenians pretend to have won a victory over 46 nations (IX 27)

2) The Great Campaign in 480/479 BC (led by Xerxes and Mardonios)

The fleet
The strength of the fleet before the battle off Artemision, which was fought at the same time as the battle at Thermopylae:
1207 ships + 120 ships of the Persian allies (VII 89; 185) – Losses by stormy weather: about 600 ships (= about 400 + 200; VII 190; VIII 7; 13) – 15 Persian ships were captured by the enemy before the battle (VII 194)
The strength of the Hellenic fleet before the battle off Artemision:

324 (= 271 + 53) ships, not counting the penteconters (VIII 2; 14)
Balance of power: 712:324 = not much more than 2:1

The strength of the Persian fleet before the battle of Salamis:
"It seems to me that the number of them invading Athenian territory by land and by sea was no less than the number of the troops who had arrived at Sepias and Thermopylae. For I would offset all those who perished in the storm, at Thermopylae, and in the sea battles off Artemision with those who joined the king after these events" (8.66.1–2)
The strength of the Hellenic fleet before the battle of Salamis:
380 ships, not counting the penteconters (VIII 48; 82) (cf. Aeschylus, *Persae* 338–340: 310 Hellenic ships)
Balance of power: roughly spoken less than 2:1

The strength of the Persian fleet before the battle off Mycale:
Heavy losses in the battle of Salamis – During winter 480/479 BC 300 ships were stationed off Samos (VIII 130)
The strength of the Hellenic fleet before the battle off Mycale:
110 ships were stationed off Aegina (VIII 131)
Balance of power: a little bit less than 3:1

The battle off Mycale (which synchronized with the battle of Plataea):
60.000 men, belonging to the fleet, fought on the mainland under Tigranes (IX 96)
"The few barbarians who had escaped had at first taken refuge on the peaks of Mycale …" (9.107.1)

The land army
The strength of the Persian army before the battle at Thermopylae:
1,700,000 infantry + 80,000 cavalry + 20,000 camel riders and charioteers coming from Asia (VII 184) + 300,000 allies from Europe (VII 185)
No losses in battle until then – losses at Thermoplyae: about 20.000 (VIII 24) – roughly equalized by new allies (VIII 66)

The strength of the Persian army in the aftermath of the battle of Salamis:
300.000 men under the command of Mardonios remained in Greece after the battle of Salamis (VIII 100; 113) – The rest of the land army withdrew (VIII 115). – No more heavy encounters with the enemy are mentioned –

nevertheless: "*Xerxes then left Mardonios in Thessaly … but did not bring back even a fraction of his army intact, if I can put it that way*" (VIII 115.1)

The battle of Plataea (which synchronized with the battle off Mycale):
The strength of Mardonios' army: 300.000 men including the cavalry + 50.000 Greek allies (VIII 113; IX 32) minus about 40.000 under Artabazos (IX 66)
The strength of the Hellenes at Plataea: 110.000 men (IX 30)
Balance of power: 310: 110 = a little bit less than 3:1
Less than 3000 of Mardonios' men survived (IX 70) – Artabazos too, on his way back, lost most of his men (IX 89–90.1)

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"I do not think anyone in his senses would accept that!" Remarks on Numbers of Fallen Soldiers in Roman Historiography and *commentarii*

Patrick Reinard

In his famous diatribe Πῶς δεῖ ἱστορίαν συγγράφειν, Lucian of Samosata polemicises about contemporary historians.[1] One aspect of his critique is focused on reports of the number of fallen enemies. He specifies the example of a battle at Dura-Europos in the war of Lucius Verus against the Parthians. One nameless historian reports more than 70,000 dead enemies while only two dead and seven wounded Roman soldiers were recorded. Allegedly, the anonymous author gives even higher casualty figures than the Roman army leaders in their official reports (Lucian., hist. conscr. 20):[2]

> "ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἐν τῷ τῶν νεκρῶν ἀριθμῷ, τοῦτο μὲν καὶ παρὰ τὰ γεγραμμένα[3] ἐν ταῖς τῶν ἀρχόντων ἐπιστολαῖς ἐψεύσατο·[4] ἐπὶ γὰρ Εὐρώπῳ τῶν μὲν

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1 Lucian's essay is full of satirical and polemical elements and there is a long discussion about the question, whether the work really is addressed to authentic contemporary historians of the Parthian war in the 160s AD; see in general the excellent paper of Strobel 1994. For the thematic issue of this paper, however this question is not relevant. As is shown by the following observations, there can be no question that contrasting reports of high numbers of fallen enemies and low numbers of Roman losses were usual in historical writing in Antonine times. Whether or not they were also used in descriptions of the war of Lucius Verus is not the point here.

2 Ad locum: Strobel, 1994: 1350; Stoll, 2016: 95: Mattern, 1999: 105–106; Kemezis, 2010: 288–290; Porod, 2013: 399 and 404–406.

3 As Homeyer stated, τὰ γεγραμμένα could have a semantic ambiguity here. Maybe it indirectly means that the official reports were also exaggerated; Hofmeyer, 1965: 219; for an extensive philological commentary see Porod, 2013; for official reports of commanders see Resch, 2010b: 95–96.

4 Porod 2013, 399 highlights that ἐψεύσατο could be intentionally ambiguous, too. Perhaps Lucian wanted to imply indirectly that the anonymous historian deliberately and intentionally gave false information.

> πολεμίων ἀποθανεῖν μυριάδας ἑπτὰ καὶ τριάκοντα καὶ ἓξ πρὸς τοῖς διακοσίοις,[5] Ῥωμαίων δὲ μόνος δύο, καὶ τραυματίας γενέσθαι ἐννέα. ταῦτα οὐκ οἶδα εἴ τις ἂν εὖ φρονῶν ἀνάσχοιτο."

Lucian concludes his critique with the assessment that a sensible and wise reader could not accept those obvious lies. Real historians should not deal with false or exaggerated numbers of fallen soldiers.

Nearly 300 years earlier, Polybios gave a detailed list of the force levels of Hannibal in Spain. He called the declaration of exact and thereby incorrect numbers in a historiographical work a sign for specious falsehoods of historians, who try to make their stupid misstatements plausible (3,33,7).[6] Polybios himself mostly gives reliable data. His report of troop strengths in the Second Punic War, for instance, is very detailed and most probably based on documentary evidence (2,24).[7] As Frank Walbank pointed out for this passage, the "figures evidently go back through Fabius to the actual *katagraphai*, and are mainly reliable".[8] For Polybios' use of documentary evidence analyzed by autopsy see also 2,33,8.

As far as we can see, the critique expressed by Lucian and Polybios was not generally accepted. In late antiquity, Orosius wrote that the manipulation of casualty numbers of Roman soldiers was a common feature of Roman historiography. As negative examples, he names Sallustius Crispus and Tacitus, and the battle of Cornelius Fuscus[9] against the Dacians in 86 AD (7,10,4):

> "nam quanta fuerint Diurpanei Dacorum regis cum Fusco duce proelia quantaeque Romanorum clades, longo textu euoluerem, nisi Cornelius Tacitus, qui hanc historiam diligentissime contexuit, de reticendo interfectorum numero et Sallustium Crispum et alios auctores quamplurimos sanxisse et se ipsum idem potissimum elegisse dixisset."

A group of authors agreed not to give any reference about the numerical data of fallen Romans. Concealing the losses seems to be a usual part of the so-called *Schlachtenrethorik* in Roman historiographical works. One has to

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5 There is the possibility that the number could read as 370,206; cf. Porod, 2013: 405.

6 Ad locum: Gelzer, 1935: 269.

7 Dreyer, 2011: 110. In general, most researcher think that Polybios was more critical of numbers; see for example Howald, 1964: 108; for general observation on the numerical data in Polyb. 2,24 see Walbank, 1957: I 196–203.

8 Walbank, 1957: 201.

9 For the historical context see Strobel, 1989: 53–56.

agree with Oliver Stoll: "[…] aber die Normalität des historiographischen Schaffens ist das Übergehen, Verschweigen oder Kleinreden der eigenen Verluste, […]."[10]

Of course, numbers of dead enemies and fallen Romans in ancient literature are mostly inauthentic[11] and in his famous monograph Peter A. Brunt, one of the best experts in demographic research for ancient Rome, stated:[12] "Of the numerical data transmitted by ancient writers, casualty figures are perhaps the least reliable."

In a brilliant book on Livy and his depiction of the history of Republican Rome, Miriam Pittenger concluded her chapter on numerical or statistical data with a statement that controversial figures may well have been the result of political competition:

> "Commanders sought to magnify their achievements by tallying the number of enemies confronted, killed, and captured, whereas their opponents tried to downplay them either by deflating those figures or by calling attention to losses sustained on the Roman side, which could be seen to offset the gains and diminish the victory."[13]

But the sources cited above, which I use for a short introduction into the subject of numbers of fallen soldiers, raise some more questions: is Polybios' accurate depiction just an exception? Is any transformation of the use and meaning of numbers visible? How were numbers transformed? Was there any intertextual reception? What was the intention for transformation? How justified is Lucian's critique? Which historical foundation is recognizable? Do Roman historians really just give fictitious numbers? And if this is the case, was there no expectation of truthful information among Roman readers? By working on these questions we will try to be Lucian's sensible man, who could not tolerate false and idiomatic numbers in historical reports – a dictum which is therefore serving as a title for this paper (ταῦτα οὐκ οἶδα εἴ τις ἂν εὖ φρονῶν ἀνάσχοιτο).

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[10] Stoll, 2016: 94.

[11] By saying that it is difficult to find out the truth about numbers of soldiers, Thucydides (5,74,3) also implicitly states that numerical information in historiography is very problematic.

[12] Brunt, 1971: 694.

[13] Pittenger, 2009: 114.

We will deal with this subject in three separate parts. First we will focus on Livy and his use of the younger annalistic tradition in comparison to the parallel tradition which is offered by Polybios. Then, in the second part, we have to take a look at war and battle reports which were contemporary to the writers of the younger annalistic tradition. Is there any link between the way of reporting numbers of enemies in the lifetime of the annalistic writers and their own historical reports of enemy numbers in the famous past? Finally, in the third part we will analyze some numbers in the works of Caesar.[14]

1. Livy and the Annalistic Tradition at Rome

Firstly, it should be said that although Livy gives many numbers in his work, only those of fallen enemies in his reports of battles seem to be overstated. Other numbers, for example those concerning war-booty or captives, do not differ from other sources; namely they do not differ from the information provided by Polybios. Therefore we will mainly focus on the number of fallen enemies in this paper.

For his depiction of the third and second century BC, Livy used writers of the younger annalistic tradition, such as Claudius Quadrigarius and Valerius Antias.[15] The latter was one of the most important sources for Livy,[16] who calls Valerius Antias the greatest of liars as far as numbers were mentioned.[17] But why did Livy and his sources only highlight the number

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[14] For a general discussion of the problem of reconstructing the process of battle actions and the number of soldiers see Bichler, 2009 who gives a great analysis of possible historical reprocessing. He focuses on the battles of Gaugamela, Kunaxa, Pharsalos and Mantineia; short lists of sources with some general remarks are offered by Sabin / De Souza, 2007: 414–416 and Campbell, 2002: 68–70.

[15] Mehl, 2001: 62. Fragments of both, Claudius Quadrigarius und Valerius Antias, give very high numbers of fallen enemies (see below); cf. Mehl, 2001: 63; for Claudius Quadrigarius and Valerius Antias see also Walter, 2004: 348–349 and 351–352; Beck / Walter, FRH II 109–111; Bleicken, 2004: 107; Albrecht, 2003: 310; Seibert, 1993: 30–31; for Claudius Quadrigarius see Ruschenbusch, 2004: 22–23 and Haas, 2015: 30–36. In the case of Valerius Antias, Delaroche 1977 has tried to explain the overestimation of numerical data by the superstitious magic of numbers. But his interpretation is not convincing.

[16] The connection of Livy and Valerius Antias is very important and also highly problematic. Antias is the most widely used source for Livy. But Antias is also the most often criticized author in Livy's *ab urbe condita*; cf. Walter, 2004: 351.

[17] Ziolkowski, 1990: 15; cf. Liv. 3,5,12: *audit tamen Antias Valerius concipere summas*; 26,49,4–5: *adeo nullus mentiendi modus est*; 30,19,12: *impundeter ficta*; 33,10,8: *si*

of fallen enemies and how did they manipulate these numbers of enemies? Adam Ziolkowski gives an answer to the first part of this question:

> "The explanation is simple: a victorious battle was the greatest possible military success and military successes determined the *dignitas* and the *auctoritas* of a noble (latter became especially important in Augustan Rome). Therefore it is understandable why generals and writers had the tendency to magnify and, if necessary, to invent Roman Victories."[18]

"Invention" is a keyword when we deal with the annalistic tradition. The invention of victories must have been a very common occurence in the early second century BC. This is evident by a known speech of Cato Censorius which had the title *de falsis pugnis* and is dated to 190 BC.[19] We know only the title, though we can imagine what kind of critique Cato would likely have expressed by using parallel sources. A good example for what the "sensible man" Cato could have meant is the legendary victory of L. Marcius over the Carthaginians in 212/211 BC.[20] Polybios does not say anything about this battle.[21] But Livy, relying on early annalistic authors, gives three different versions. The early annalist L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi,[22] who wrote in the second half of the second century BC, speaks of a victory over the Carthaginian army lead by Mago. 5,000 enemies were killed in this battle (Liv. 25,39,15; see below).[23] The number of 5,000 Carthaginians is highly problematic because it is the exact number of dead enemies which was a condition to celebrate a triumph in Rome (Val. Max. 2,8,1); see also Liv. 30,19,11 for 5,000 dead enemies in a battle at Kroton. The law which regulated the right for a triumph was published after 179 BC (until 143 BC).[24] L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi wrote his early

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Valerio qui credit omnium rerum inmodice numerum augenti. Claudius Quadrigarius is also criticized by Livy (38,23,8); cf. Klotz, 1940: 92–93; Beck / Walter, FRH II: 170.

18 Ziolkowski, 1990: 15.

19 For the historical context see Kienast, 1979: 50; Ziolkowski, 1990: 30.

20 Ziolkowski, 1990: 17.

21 Ziolkowski, 1990: 17.

22 For introductory remarks on L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi see Beck / Walter, FRH: 282–285; Albrecht, 2003: 305.

23 F 32 Peter = F 42 Forsythe = Beck / Walter, FRH II nr. 7,35.

24 Ziolkowski, 1990: 19. The evidence for the regulation and especially its date and normative compliance is much discussed and it is not possible to expound on the problem here. But it is sufficient for our investigation of the casualty numbers in the annalistic tradition to state that the law probably was established earlier – most probably in the

annalistic work afterwards. This already indicates that his information of 5,000 dead enemies could be false. But the tradition transformed this battle in a remarkable way.[25] After L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi two further annalists – writers of the so-called younger annalistic tradition – Claudius Quadrigarius and Valerius Antias, wrote that the whole army of Mago was destroyed in the battle in 212 BC; around 37,000 casualties and 1,830 captives (Claudius Quadrigarius) or 17,000 casualties and 4,330 captives (Valerius Antias) were reported. Both text passages are transmitted by Livy who refers to them together with the fragment of L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi (Liv. 25,39,12–15):[26]

> "Ad triginta septem milia hostium caesa auctor est Claudius, qui annales Acilianos ex Graeco in Latinum sermonem uertit; captos ad mille octingentos triginta. […] Valerius Antias una castra Magonis capta tradit, septem milia caesa hostium; altero proelio eruptione pugnatum cum Hasdrubale, decem milia occisa, quattuor milia trecentos triginta captos. Piso quinque milia hominum, cum Mago cedentes nostros effuse sequeretur, caesa ex insidiis scribit."

For his account, Claudius Quadrigarius used the early annalist C. Acilius, who published his *annales* in the second half of the second century BC.[27] The additional information given by the relative clause *qui annales Acilianos ex Graeco in Latinum sermonem vertit* must be understood in the way that Claudius' information was taken from the Greek annals. This would indicate that even in the time of the early annalists, very high numbers of fallen enemies were possible.

Anyway, it is absolutely clear that the annalistic tradition transformed the numbers and maybe invented the whole victory of L. Marcius. There is no really historic information in all these reports. We should remember that Polybios does not even mention the most famous victory of L. Marcius in 212 BC.

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first half of the second century BC; for the discussion see, e.g. Develin, 1978 or Pittenger, 2009: 104–114.

[25] We have to add here that L. Marcius was portrayed by the annalistic tradition in a very outstanding way. Beck/ Walter, FRH II: 239: "Seine Taten als eigenverantwortlicher Feldherr wurden in der 'annalistischen' Tradition geradezu heroisiert"; see also Liv. 25,39,16.

[26] F 5 Jacoby = Beck / Walter, FRH I Nr. 5,6 and F 57a Peter = Beck / Walter, FRH II nr. 14,57.

[27] For C. Acilius see Beck / Walter, FRH: I 232–233; Albrecht, 2003: 302.

Another example for an invention is the so-called 'first battle of Zama'. This invention was initiated by Valerius Antias and then transmitted by Livy (30,29,7).[28] Apart from Appian (Lib. 36) and the late Zonaras (9,14), no really reliable evidence is adducible for this battle. Valerius Antias again states a high number of 12,000 fallen soldiers; for his standards, 12,000 seem to be low but the depiction of the first battle was most probably designed as a prelude to the main and historic 'second' battle of Zama in 202 BC. The invention can be detected because Valerius Antias says that Hannibal himself came to the Roman camps after the first battle for some negotiations with Scipio. No other source reports this meeting of the two famous commanders and even Appian and Zonoras do not recount this story. Therefore the first battle of Zama must be an invention of Valerius Antias.

But how and to which extent did the transformation of Roman annalists manipulate the past? We need to compare Livy with a parallel tradition which is not dependent to the annalistic works of Roman writers. Thus, the only source which allows a comparison of Livy is Polybios. Two battles which are described by both Polybios and by Livy are the battle of Kynoskephalai in 197 BC and the battle at the Metaurus in 207 BC.

At Kynoskephalai Philipp V. lost 8,000 dead soldiers and 5,000 captives in the work of Polybios (18,27).[29] For his depiction, Livy used Polybios and also Valerius Antias and Claudius Quadrigarius (33,10,7–10):[30]

> "Caesa eo die octo milia hostium, quinque capta. Ex victoribus septingenti ferme ceciderunt. Si Valerio qui credat omnium rerum immodice numerum augenti, quadraginta milia hostium eo die sunt caesa; capta – ibi modestius mendacium est – quinque milia septingenti, signa militaria ducenta undequinquaginta. Claudius quoque duo et triginta milia hostium caesa scribit, capta quattuor milia et trecentos. Nos non minimo potissimum numero credidimus sed Polybium secuti sumus, non incertum auctorem cum omnium Romanarum rerum tum praecipue in Graecia gestarum."

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[28] *Valerius Antias primo proelio victum cum a Scipione, quo duodecim milia armatorum in acie sint caesa, mille et septingenti capti, legatum cum aliis decem legatis tradit in castra ad Scipionem venisse*; F 30 Peter = Beck / Walter, FRH II nr. 15,31; cf. Walter, 2004: 302 and 351.

[29] Ziolkowski, 1990: 18; Walbank, 1957: II 584–585; for the historical context see Bringmann, 2002: 125.

[30] F 62 Peter = Beck / Walter, FRH II nr. 14,62 and F 32 Peter = Beck / Walter, FRH II nr. 15,33; ad locum: Klotz, 1940: 93.

Valerius Antias and Claudius Quadrigarius report that Philipp V. lost 40,000 dead soldiers and 5,700 captives or 32,000 dead soldiers and 4,300 captives respectively. By contrasting these figures of fallen enemies with the data given by Polybius we can see that Valerius Antias simply multiplied the figure by a factor of five and Claudius Quadrigarius by a factor of four. Claudius Quadrigarius may have gotten his information from Alkaios of Messene. In one epigram, Alkaios mentions the number of 30,000 dead Macedonians after the battle of Kynoskephalai (Plut., Tit. 9,2). Claudius Quadrigarius' work could probably be based on this evidence.[31] But this together with C. Acilius (see above) would be the only case of a precedent source with exorbitant numbers.

The reports about the battle at the Metaurus in the Second Punic War are comparable with the evidence for Kynoskephalai. For the Metaurus, Livys speaks of 57,000 dead Carthaginians and 5,400 captives (*quinquaginta septem milia hostium occisa, capta quinque milia et quadringenti*; 27,49,6).[32] The surviving fragment of Polybios (11,3)[33] gives 10,000 dead enemies and the fragment no number of captives.

The evidence for the Metaurus[34] battle again demonstrates the working style of the younger annalistic tradition: Livy's nameless sources – probably he used Valerius Antias and Claudius Quadrigarius again[35] – record a number which could roughly be the result of a multiplication by factor five or four (57,000 : 5 = 11,400 or 57,000 : 4 = 14,250). But even if we assume a multiplication by factor five or four, the number of fallen enemies does not conform with Polybios' record of 10,000 dead men. Another point is important here: Livy (27,49,5) implicitly says that the battle at the Metaurus in 207 BC had to be bigger than the Roman defeat in the battle of Cannae in 216 BC. Perhaps this Roman intention explains the exaggeration.

During the time of the writers of the younger annalistic tradition mentioned (it is the first half of the first century BC), there were many important and successful generals such as Sulla. In reports and memoirs these successes were overstated.[36] Sulla exaggerated the enemy losses for

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31 Klotz, 1940: 94.

32 Ziolkowski, 1990: 19.

33 Ad locum: Walbank, 1957: II 273–274.

34 For the historical context see Bringmann, 2002: 118.

35 Although it is possible that Livy used L. Coelius Antipater here; cf. Klotz, 1940: 116.

36 Ziolkowski, 1990: 20.

his battles. In the same way the annalists changed the past and multiplied the enemy losses; and furthermore, sometimes they invented fictitious battles like those of L. Marcius in 212 BC or the so-called 'first battle of Zama'. This shows that untruths about recent events (first half of the first century BC), which were motivated by contemporary political circumstances, also influenced the historical dimension of Roman thought. In this way, lies of contemporary generals like Sulla indirectly transformed the performance of earlier commanders because the writers of the younger annalistic tradition tried to match or equate the accounts of famous historical battles to present events. Maybe this reflects a form of reader expectation in the first century BC.

In the time before the new triumph law there was no intention to count the dead enemies and there was also no intention to exaggerate the numbers of fallen fighters. This is clearly visible by the evidence of Cato Censorius. It was not necessary for Cato to detail the number of dead Iberians, which he beat at Emporiae in 195 BC.[37] Livy writes about this battle (Liv. 34,15,9):[38]

> "Valerius Antias supra quadraginta milia hostium caesa eo die scribit. Cato ipse, haud sane detrectator laudum suarum, multos caesos ait, numerum non adscribit."

Cato, who was not a *detrectator* of his personal glory, did not find it necessary to *adscribere* the number of killed enemies. Through the words *Cato ipse ... adscribit* it seems to be clear that Livy's text is directly based on the *origines* of Cato.[39] In the time of Sulla, Valerius Antias did not use the available sources (the account by Cato mentioned above); for Livy in Augustan Rome, it was still possible to use it, so it is highly probable that Valerius Antias some decades earlier had also read Cato's account. But for the writer of the younger annalistic tradition, it was not sufficient to speak of "many killed enemies" as Livy later did. Valerius Antias considered it necessary to invent a high number of fallen enemies. Maybe there was – as has already been said – an expectation on the part of Roman readers, which compelled Valerius to write that 40,000 enemies were killed in the battle of Emporias. Livy did not claim any other source reporting evidence

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[37] For the historical context see Heftner, 2005: 356–357 and Astin, 1978: 308–318.

[38] F 92 Peter = Beck / Walter, FRH I nr. 5,1 (Cato) and F 35 Peter = Beck / Walter, FRH II nr. 15,37 (Valerius Antias); ad locum: Kienast, 1979: 23; Ziolkowski, 1990: 20.

[39] Cf. Tränkle, 1970; Beck / Walter, FRH: 208.

for this high number. But, as we have seen, he reports that Cato did not give any count. Therefore it is very probable that there was no concrete number in the source documentation until Valerius Antias' account, which is likely just an invention. But this invention built up a tradition, because in the second century AD Appian records the whole army of the hostiles with 40,000 fighters (Ib. 40). Although he does not speak of fallen enemies it is nevertheless clear that Appian used the tradition which started with Valerius Antias' invention. The high number indicates once more that Antias simply multiplied a realistic but not transmitted number by the factor four or five; or he used a kind of prototype (see below).

Something else is noticeable here: The number of captives is often about 5,000 men. First of all, it is very interesting that this number conforms with the 5,000 which were necessary for a triumph. Maybe the intention of the annalists was a statement alone the following lines: these famous historical battles were so important and huge that the legally necessary number of 5,000 was not only outstripped by the ten thousands of dead enemies but also by the number of captives. Another origin of the trope of 5,000 captives is not attested in any way. A link with the law of triumph, which was important in the time of Valerius Antias, Claudius Quadrigarius and Livy, is possible. But otherwise this interpretation does not fit with the evidence of Polybios. The number of captives in Livy seems to be quite normal for the annalistic tradition and it also seems to be normal for Polybios; a comparison with the data for the battle of Kynoskephalai indicates this. And as far as we can see, Polybios does not seems to be influenced by the triumphal law. His information suggests that a total of circa 5,000 captives was (sometimes) realistic. We may thus perhaps take the numbers of captives in the younger annalistic tradition and also in Livy as authentic data. The annalists only transformed one element of the numbers of losses: the dead soldiers.

But even if the numbers of captives are authentic, one has to ask, why the annalistic tradition did not multiply these figures? An explanation is possible: war prisoners were sold *sub corona* in Rome. The public revenues were recorded in official accounts of the quaestors.[40] Maybe a multiplication of the prisoner numbers would be an easily observed lie or mistake. The reader and Roman audience could easily detect this transformation of reality.

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[40] Ziolkowski, 1990: 20.

Beside the battle of Kynoskephalai and the battle at the Metaurus there is a third combat which allows a comparison of Livy and Polybios. It is the Battle of the Aegates Islands in the First Punic War (241 BC).[41] The text of Livy is lost at this point, but Orosius and Eutropius have used Livy for their late antique *breviaria*. In this case we also can use Diodor as a further comparable Greek source. For a better reception and understanding of the following comparing analysis the text passages of the mentioned authors are given:

> Polyb. 1,61,6:[42] καὶ πεντήκοντα μὲν αὐτῶν ναῦς κατέδυσαν, ἑβδομήκοντα δ' ἑάλωσαν αὔτανδροι.
> Diod. 24,11,1: κατὰ δὲ τοῦτον τὸν πόλεμον ἀπέβαλον Καρχηδόνιοι ναῦς ἑκατὸν ἑπτακαίδεκα, αὐτάνδρους μὲν τούτων εἴκοσι (Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ ὀγδοήκοντα, τριάκοντα μὲν εἰς τέλος, πεντήκοντα δὲ εἰς ἐπιμερισμόν) αἰχμαλώτους δέ, ὡς Φιλῖνος ἀνέγραψε, Καρχηδονίων ἑξακισχιλίους, ὡς δὲ ἕτεροι, τετραράκοντα.

The Livian tradition used by Orosius and Eutropius:

> Oros. 4,10,7: crudescente pugna victus Hanno navem auertit et dux fugae primus fuit. aliquanta cum eo pars exercitus sui Africam petiit, alii confugere Lilybaeum; sexaginta et tres Punicae naues captae sunt, centum viginti quinque demersae, triginta duo milia hominum capta, caesa quattuordecim milia fuere; Romanorum autem duodecim naues demersae sunt.
> Eutr. 2,27,3: Contra Lilybaeum, civitatem Siciliae, pugnatum est ingenti virtute Romanorum. Nam LXIII Carthaginiensium naves captae sunt, CXXV demersae, XXXII milia hostium capta, XIII milia occisa. […] ex classe Romana XII naves demersae.

Polybios says that the Carthaginian lost 120 ships (fifty were sunk, seventy taken) and 10,000 captured enemies. Diodorus reports the loss of 117 ships (twenty were taken with the entire crew) and he also reports that there was the loss of 6,000 or 4,040 captives. Diodorus bases his information about the number of captives on the works of Philinos of Akragas and another anonymous writer.

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41 Ziolkowski, 1990: 20–22.

42 Ad locum: Walbank, 1957: I 125.

Gaetano De Sanctis[43] explained the differences the numbers of captured soldiers in Polybios and Diodorus by an emendation. It is not possible and also not necessary to repeat the wise emendation here but the result makes it highly probable that Diodorus originally meant that the Romans captured 6,000 Carthaginian and 4,040 other mercenaries or other allies. In total, the number of captives in Diodorus would thus be 10,040. Polybios and Diodorus thus give nearly equivalent information and it is probable that they represent one and the same tradition. Maybe both used Philinos' description of the battle.[44]

The sources in the Livian tradition give other figures: Orosius und Eutropius both report 63 ships captured, 125 ships sunk and 32,000 captives. Once more it is recognizable that the annalistic tradition multiplied numbers, in this case – and this is a difference to descriptions of land battles – they multiplied the number of captives. Maybe the false number of 6,000 captives, taken from Diodorus, was multiplied by a factor of five – this would be, as we have already seen, a quite normal way of transformation in Roman annalistic texts. But this would mean that the emendation of De Sanctis corrected a mistake which was already very common in the first century BC; and if we say that Livy here again used Valerius Antias or Claudius Quadrigarius, it becomes clear that this mistake was already very common in the first half of the first century BC.

At the Aegates Islands – and Adam Ziolkowski[45] has already highlighted this aspect – the Roman fleet was not commanded by the consul C. Lutatius Catulus, who was recovering from wounds at this time. Instead, the quaestor Q. Valerius Falto was in command and he was the true victor of the battle. After the return to Rome, a dispute between the consul C. Lutatius Catulus and the quaestor Q. Valerius Falto arose. Who should be honoured in triumph? In the end, both men were granted a triumph, Falto for leading the army to victory and Catulus because the battle had taken place under his auspices. This dispute between the two leading Roman officials influenced the historical depiction of the number of captives. Livy reports that C. Lutatius Catulus and Q. Valerius Falto had captured Punic mercenaries not only in the battle at the Aegates Islands but also in other fights. For example, Catulus had captured Carthaginians at Drepanon,

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[43] de Sanctis, 1968: 228; cf. Ziolkowski, 1990: 21.

[44] For Polybios' use of Philinos see Walbank, 1945; short remarks by Dreyer, 2011: 101 and 129–130.

[45] Ziolkowski, 1990: 22.

Lilybaeum and at Mount Eryx (21,41,6). It is highly probable that the annalistic tradition just simplified the evidence by summarizing the different numbers of captives. They added the different numbers of captives taken in the campaigns of C. Lutatius Catulus and his Quaestor Q. Valerius Falto; the final figure is the result of at least four events: Drepanon, Lilybaeum, Mount Eryx and the Aegate Islands. The result was the abnormally high number of 32,000 captives. The reason for this construct of the past was the fact that both commanders were honoured with triumphs. The historical reason for the triumph was the victory at the Aegates Islands. But in reality Catulus had no influence on the fight. The only success of Catulus was the earlier capture of some mercenaries. And in the annalistic tradition his successful capture of mercenaries was supplemented by the real number of captured enemies taken at the naval battle near the Aegates Islands. Other sources report that there were more than 20,000 Carthaginian mercenaries who were shipped from Sicily to North Africa at the end of the First Punic War in 201 BC (Pol. 1,67,13; Nepos, Hamil. 2,2).[46] This number suggests that the figure of 32,000 in Livy is not too high if we consider that it is the result of more than one battle. Further, Livy says that Carthage paid ransom for all these mercenaries (for example: 21,41,6). This leads to the interpretation that the high number of 32,000 captives, which at first sight and in contrast to other recorded numbers of captives seems to be totally exaggerated, is realistic because it is not only the result of the battle at the Aegates Island but rather the summation of not less than four battles. Here the transformation of numbers is the result of a conflation or equalization of historical events in the annalistic tradition. It is not the result of reader expectations which were influenced by the self-aggrandising generals of the first century BC. The writers of the annalistic tradition just had to simplify the past events because they were dependent on the historical "fact" that C. Lutatius Catulus also celebrated a triumph in Rome. The foundation of this was not only the victory at the Aegates Islands but rather a conflation of a plurality of events which lead to the rise an "alternative fact": the 32,000 captives at the Aegates Islands in 241 BC.

It is important to analyse some battles which were only described by Livy, and not by Polybios or other Greek sources like Diodorus. How can we deal with given numbers of fallen soldiers in such cases? How to

[46] Ziolkowski, 1990: 22.

interpret or deconstruct the information? We need closed or locked thematic frames to do any analyses.

A most important example is the war against the Ligurians between 201 and 191 BC. In this case we – as already said – cannot use Polybius as a comparative source. But we can use the different descriptions in Livy for a text-centered approach. Livy describes eight different battles which can be categorized into two different groups subdivided by the level of dead enemies:[47] (1) Silva Litana, 8,000 dead enemies (Liv. 34,22,2); Mediolanum, 10,000 dead enemies (Liv. 34,46,1); Longus' victory, 11,000 dead enemies (Liv. 34,47,1); Mutina, 14,000, dead enemies (Liv. 35,5,13); (2) Nasica's victory, 28,000 dead enemies (Liv. 36,38,6)[48]; Cremona, 31,21,17, 35,000 dead / captured enemies (Liv. 31,21,17); Mincio, 35,000 dead enemies (Liv. 32,11-12); Comum, 40,000 dead enemies (Liv. 33,36,13.

The reason for the high numbers in the second group can be recognized in the information which is given by the *fasti triumphales* (Inscr. Ital. XIII,1 551–552).[49] The generals who won at Cremona, Minicio and Comum celebrated triumphs in Rome; Nasica celebrated a triumphal feast in Rome, too. Maybe the high numbers are simply to show the importance of these battles, because a Roman audience in the city on the Tiber still was aware of the triumphs.

If we put back in mind that the multiplication with a factor of four or five was a common method in the annalistic tradition, we may arrive at more realistic numbers: 5,600 / 7,000 for Nasica's victory; 7,000 / 8,750 for Cremona and Mincio; 8,000 / 10,000 for Comum. It is interesting that even these "corrected" numbers are higher than the count of 5,000 fallen enemies which was necessary for a triumph since 179 BC. But for the writers of the annalistic tradition, it may have been necessary to increase the figures to a higher scale.

The fact that, for the battles with lower numbers of dead enemies, Livy does not give information about the capture of enemies is conspicuous. Only in the case of Mutina, the battle ending up with 14,000 dead enemies, Livy mentions 1,092 captives. In the battles with high numbers of dead enemies, he mentions 5,200 (Mincio) and 3,400 (Nasica) captured enemies. Furthermore, Livy sometimes gives information about the

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47 Ziolkowski, 1990: 23–28.

48 Based on Valerius Antias; F 41 Peter = Beck / Walter, FRH II nr. 15, 42.

49 Ziolkowski, 1990: 25.

capture of signa, horses and wagons, though only for battles with high numbers of dead enemies. Why does he not describe other battles with low numbers in this fashion? Maybe these battles were invented and are just fictitious – as Adam Ziolkoswdki argued.[50] Or was there no memory of the generals of these battles in Rome because they did not celebrate a triumph? We cannot answer this question. At this point we can only describe the abnormality in Livy's narrative explanation. In my opinion it is absolutely clear that the high numbers are linked to the celebrations of triumphs in Rome. We can recognize a tendency of attesting more importance to the battles of the second group, which consists of famous *triumphatores*.

Equally interesting is an older interpretation by Friedrich Münzer,[51] who thought that the given data for the battles of Cremona and Mincio were a doublet. In Cremona Livy or his source report the combined number 35,000 dead and captured enemies, 70 signa and 200 wagons were also captured. For Mincio Livy or his annalistic source report 35,000 dead enemies, 5,200 captives, 134 signa and 200 wagons. The identical numbers of 35,000 and 200 lead to Münzer's interpretation that both battles and also the resulting triumphs were not authentic. But Münzer did not, as Ziolkowski argues,[52] regard to Livy's description (31,47–49) of the triumph of the praetor L. Furius Purpureo, the commander at Cremona. Maybe his victory in Cremona was not a normal battle; it could have been a military campaign which forced the Celts to end the siege of the mentioned city. At this point we have to consider the context of the battle description. Purpureo marched against the Celts who besieged Cremona. In the time of the younger annalistic tradition and in the time of Livy, namely in the first century BC, a general had to win a battle in the field, otherwise he had no chance for a triumph. But more than a hundred years earlier, in the beginning of the second century BC this was not the case. Maybe this is the reason why the tradition had to transform the so-called battle of Cremona. And so they used the comparative evidence from a contemporary event from the same context. This could be an explanation for the resemblance of both battle depictions. But of course this interpretation does not disprove Münzer's argument. Maybe the whole description is an invention of the annalistic tradition.

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[50] Ziolkowski, 1990: 28.

[51] Münzer, RE VII,1: 362 (L. Furius Purpureo).

[52] Ziolkowski, 1990: 26.

One parallel which occurs as a direct influence on the Roman annalistic tradition is Rome's victory over the Gallic tribes at Telamon in 225 BC. Polybios reports 40,000 dead Gallic enemies. It is not clear if the given data by Polybios or maybe his source Fabius Pictor is correct at this point, but this is not the question here. It is important that the report of the battle at Telamon became a kind of archetype for further descriptions of battles and wars against Gallic enemies.[53] Thenceforth, this battle served as a model for annalistic accounts of Roman victories over Celts, which resulted in a triumph in Rome. One proof for the use of the Telamon battle as an archetype was already mentioned, i.e. the battle which Cato Censorius won against the Iberians at Emporiae. Cato, as we have seen, reported no numbers, but Valerius Antias gave 40,000 dead Iberians or Celti-Iberians. Here the battle of Telamon served as a kind of prototype. Maybe this case is comparable with the 'doublet' of Cremona and Mincio.

2. Did Memoir Literature Influence the Younger Annalistic Tradition?

After these short remarks on the younger annalistic tradition, it is important to observe the *Zeitgeist* of the first half of the first century BC. Livy's sources, Valerius Antias and Claudius Quadrigarius, both wrote around the time of Sulla. And in this time some abnormal numbers appeared in historiography and in memoir literature. Most important is the number 120,000.

Archelaos commanded 120,000 soldiers in the battle of Chaironeia in 86 BC (App., Mithrid. 41; Plut., Sulla 22). Mithridates VI. Eupator led 120,000 infantry into war (Plut., Lucull. 7). Sulla gave lands to a total of 120,000 veterans in Italy (App., bell. civ. 1,104). Romans led 120,000 men against Sertorius (Plut., Sertor. 12) and Spartacus 120,000 men against Rome (App., bell. civ. 1,117). Pompeius commanded 120,000 Roman soldiers against the pirates (Plut., Pomp. 26).[54]

A second number which often appears in sources reporting about the first half or the middle of the first century BC is 400, mostly connected with cities and villages. L. Licinius Murena invaded 400 Pontic villages in the second war against Mithridates (App., Mithrid. 65). In the campaigns against the pirates the army of Pompeius captured 400 villages (Plut., Pomp. 24).

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[53] Ziolkowski, 1990: 29.

[54] A compilation of this numerical data was collected by Hirschfeld, 1913: 291–293.

These numbers were not highlighted in the works of the younger annalistic tradition, which was contemporary to Sulla. Livy and his sources do not use these numbers and there are no cases of earlier writers like Polybios, Diodor or Fabius Pictor, and also other authors of the early or younger annalistic tradition, using these figures, either. The tradition of the use of 120,000 men and 400 villages or cities in a widespread military context is a phenomenon of the time of Sulla and Pompeius, respectively a phenomenon of the later sources reporting about the time of Sulla and Pompeius. Maybe it was invented in the memoir-literature which became popular in the epoch of the late republic, especially in the first century BC. The most important is the autobiographical work of Sulla. His memoirs must be seen as a kind of caesura in self-display and self-portrayal of personal history. Peter Scholz and Uwe Walter rightly state:

> "Bis dahin [sc. the time of Sulla] war noch nie von einem römischen Aristokraten so ausführlich und noch nie so persönlich der eigene Werdegang und die Kriegstaten geschildert worden." [55]

The Sullanic memoirs were very influential and were often used by Plutarch, Appian and others. Thus, the reception of abnormal numbers of enemies is recognizable in these later sources. A passage in Plutarch is a case in point (Plut., Sull. 19):[56]

> "πολλοὶ μὲν οὖν ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ τῶν βαρβάρων ἀνῃροῦντο, πλεῖστοι δὲ τῷ χάρακι προσφερόμενοι κατεκόπησαν, ὥστε μυρίους διαπεσεῖν εἰς Χαλκίδα μόνους ἀπὸ τοσούτων μυριάδων. ὁ δὲ Σύλλας λέγει τέσσαρας καὶ δέκα ἐπιζητῆσαι τῶν αὐτοῦ στρατιωτῶν, εἶτα καὶ τούτων δύο πρὸς τὴν ἑσπέραν παραγενέσθαι."

Plutarch delivers some parts of Sulla's memoirs, for example his remarks on his victory in Chaironeia in 86 BC.[57] Sulla said afterwards that he won the battle and that only 14 soldiers were lost, but two of them returned to the camp in the evening after the battle. His enemies, on the other hand, had suffered myriads of losses, with 10,000 even fleeing to Chalkis (Plut., Sulla 19,7). 10,000 survivors of the Mithridatic army are also recorded by Appian (Mithr. 45,174), but in addition to Plutarch he gives the total number of the soldiers of Mithridates, which was 120,000. It is probable

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[55] Scholz / Walter, 2013: 81.

[56] Scholz / Walter, 2013 nr. 16 = F 15 Peter; ad locum: Porod, 2013: 404.

[57] For the historical context see Christ, 2007: 204.

that Appian used Sulla's memoirs, too. Elsewhere, Appian explicitly speaks of an anonymous source for the history of Sulla (bell. civ. 1,452–455).[58] So it also seems to be possible that Appian indirectly received Sulla's memoirs. But he is indubitably following in the tradition based on Sulla's self-representation.

This tradition also was continued in late antiquity by Eutropius (5,6,3) and with little differences by Orosius (6,2,5). Both are probably based on Livy, who records 100,000 dead Pontic soldiers (per. 82,1). Thereby, Livy indirectly gives the number of 20,000 surviving Pontic fighters. Concerning the number of fallen Roman soldiers, the low number of Plutarch is confirmed by Appian, who speaks of fifteen (Mithr. 45,174), and Eutropius, who speaks of thirteen (5,6,3) dead Romans. The inequality of the numbers is unexplainable, but it is clear that there is a strong tradition saying that Sulla had unbelievably low losses. The contrasting numbers of 10.000 fleed enemies, 120,000 Pontic soldiers and only about twelve lost Roman soldiers are extreme exaggerations. It is very probable that Plutarch provides the authentic report and numbers of Sulla, which build up a tradition from Livy over Appian and Plutarch to Eutropius and Orosius. The only source which reports the lower number of 60,000 enemies is Memnon (FGrH 434 F 1,22,12–13), but it seems that there was no reception of his data in later times. The Sullanic tradition was stronger.

Why did Sulla artificially reduce the numbers of fallen Roman soldiers? Uwe Walter and Peter Scholz explained Sulla's intention with his wish to be an *optimus imperator* who takes care of his fighters:

> "Bemerkenswert ist mit Blick auf die mehrmalige Erwähnung der geringen Verluste in seinem eigenen Heer etwas anderes: Damit stellte Sulla überaus deutlich seine fürsorgliche Haltung als Heerespatron heraus, der, sofern sich die Soldaten diszipliniert und loyal verhalten und im Krieg ausgezeichnet hatten, die Erinnerung an ihre Leistungen weitertrug und sie hierfür angemessen belohnte."[59]

Furthermore, a second intention is likely:

> "Die hohen Verluste des von der bloßen Zahl her weit überlegenen pontischen Gegners […] und die verschwindend geringen Verluste der eigenen

[58] Ungern-Stern, 2006: 214.

[59] Scholz / Walter, 2013: 84.

> Truppe bei der Schlacht von Chaironeia werden betont, um Sullas große taktische Fähigkeiten zu unterstreichen."[60]

And, finally, the general intention is absolutely clear, as Oliver Stoll points out:

> "Die *ratio* dabei ist leicht einsichtig: große Verluste beim Verlierer bedeuten Niederlage, keine Verluste beim Sieger bedeuten: umso größer ist der Sieg."[61]

Sulla's exaggerations concerning the battle of Chaironeia is no exception. For the battle of Sacriportus in 82 BC, Plutarch – again using Sulla's memoirs – gives the information of 23 dead soldiers in the army of Sulla, but 20,000 dead and 8,000 captured soldiers in the army of his opponents (Sull. 28,13):[62] Plutarch (Sull. 27,6) cites another passage of the memoirs in his remarks on the civil war in 83 BC:[63]

> "ὁ Σύλλας […] διέβαινεν, ὥς φησιν αὐτός, ἐπὶ πεντκαίδεκα στρατηγοὺς πολεμίος πεντήκοντα καὶ τετρακοσίας σπείρας ἔχοντας […]."

The extreme number of 450 *cohortes* would mean that his opponents employed an army of around 225,000 men.[64] Appian reports the figure of 200 *cohortes* or 100,000 soldiers. But he explicitly says that the army of the opponents has grown until the battle (bell. civ. 1,82,373). Appian also records the manpower of Sulla's army, for which he gives the number of 40,000 soldiers. Again, we must interpret these huge numbers and the clear contrast of both force powers as the result of Sulla's exaggeration. He used the extremely high number of enemies to praise his victory over the opponents.

In the late antique authors, some differences are visible: Orosius (5,20,6–9) reports 25,000 dead soldiers of Marius' army. Eutropius (5,8,1) speaks of 15,000 dead enemies of Sulla while only 400 men of his troops fell.[65] Maybe there was a different development in the Latin tradition which could be in connection with lost parts of Livy? But what we can say is

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60 Scholz / Walter, 2013: 122.

61 Stoll, 2016: 94, n. 13.

62 Scholz / Walter, 2013 nr. 21 = F 19 Peter.

63 Scholz / Walter, 2013 nr. 20 = F 18 Peter.

64 Scholz / Walter, 2013: 130.

65 For the realistic strength of military forces at battle of Sacriportus cf. Brunt, 1971: 441–445.

that Orosius' data of 25,000 dead enemies fits well with the recognizable tendencies of Sulla's self-representation.

At this point, a connection with Lucian's polemic critique which we focused at the introduction of this paper, is obvious. When Lucian speaks of the nonsensical juxtaposition of more than 70,000 dead enemies and two dead Roman soldiers at the battle of Dura Europos, a link to the Sullanic remarks in Plutarch seems to be clear.[66]

Beside the examples of Plutarch and Appian, we also recognize some extremely exaggerated numbers in the *Anabasis* of Arrian (3,15,6 or 5,18,2–3). He, too, uses the contrast of high and low losses. It is possible that we have two different traditions which influence the contemporary historiography in the time of Lucian: one based on the self-representing autobiographical literature which started with Sulla and was transmitted by Plutarch and Appian, and a second one could possibly originating with Arrian and his use of Greek sources. Or is Arrian also influenced by the Roman literature and adopted huge contrasts of high and low casualty numbers from the Sullanic tradition? It is not possible to solve this problem in this paper, which focuses on Roman history and Roman historiographical practice. Therefore, we have to skip Arrian at this point.[67]

An example of contrasting high numbers of fallen enemies and low numbers of fallen Roman soldiers is also given by Valerius Antias via Livy (36,19,10–12):[68]

> "Quid, si Antiati Ualerio credamus sexaginta milia militum fuisse in regio exercitu scribenti, quadraginta inde milia cecidisse, supra quinque milia capta cum signis militaribus ducentis triginta? Romanorum centum quinquaginta in ipso certamine pugnae."

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66 Another high number in Appian (civ. 1,50,221) is his account of 50,000 dead Samnites in the battle of Nola in 89/88 BC. It is not clear but probable that Appian again used Sulla's memoirs in this case. Maybe Cicero was an eyewitness of the events in Nola because he served under Sulla in 89 BC (Plut., Cic. 3,1). He also uses Sulla's memoirs (Scholz / Walter 2013 nr. 9 = F 9 Peter) in his work *de divinatione* to give some remarks about a sacrifice before the battle of Nola (div. 1,72); cf. Scholz / Walter, 2013: 115–116; Gelzer, 2014: 9.

67 In general it is possible that the Herodotean description of the battle of Plataiai (9,70,5; myriads of dead Persian soldiers but only 91 Spartans, 52 Athenians and 16 Tegeates fell) was a model for later historical depictions which used exaggerated high and low numbers of battling forces.

68 F 39 Peter = Beck / Walter, FRH II nr. 15,40.

In the war against Antiochos III, 60,000 soldiers were led against the Roman army. More than 40,000 fell and 5,000 were captured. The Romans had suffered only a few losses, i.e. 150 men. Livy also used Polybios at this point:

> "nec praeter quingentos, qui circa regem fuerunt, ex toto exercitu quisquam effugit, etiam ex decem milibus militum, quos Polybio auctore traiecisse secum regem in Graeciam scripsimus, exiguus numerus."

Polybios gives a realistic number. But it is more important that he did not give a contrast of a high a number of dead enemies and a low number of dead Romans. This method of contrasting has become common in Roman historiographical writing in the first century BC.

It is interesting to compare the already seen information of the Sullanic memoirs with a fragment which offers a depiction of the battle of Vercellae in 101 BC. This text part was also used by Plutarch, who depicts the much discussed battle in Mar. 25,6–8:[69] Q. Lutatius Catulus led 20,300 soldiers in the center of the front line and C. Marius commanded 32,000 men on the wings of the army. It is important that as far as we can see in our available sources for the reconstruction of his memoirs, Sulla nowhere commands an army of more than 40,000 soldiers (App., civ. 1,82,373). Maybe this was another narrative strategy of Sulla in his memoirs: some famous Roman commanders used more troops, but they had many problems with the barbarians from the north. Sulla's victorious armies were smaller, but he had more success. He clearly was the better commander.

The exaggeration of numbers by Sulla started the process of transformation in two ways. The contemporary annalists like Valerius Antias or Claudius Quadrigarius saw the need to raise the numbers in their historical works because the expectations of a Roman audience had changed after Sulla's enormous successes which he exaggerated in his memoirs. The self-representation of mighty men like the *dictator rei publicae constituendae* Sulla outshone the reports about the Roman victories in the past. Therefore Valerius Antias, Claudius Quadrigarius and probably other annalistic writers transformed former events because they had to show that the "heroes" in their historical stories were also mighty and famous commanders.[70] The annalists adjusted and adopted their numbers to

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[69] For the historical context see Christ, 2007: 162.

[70] That annalistic writers were influenced by contemporary political circumstances is for example recognizable in the case of Claudius Quadrigarius. His annalistic work incor-

contemporary standards.[71] Dieter Timpe called this a quantitative update.[72] But the annalistic tradition did not use symbolic numbers like 120,000, which occur in the contemporary memoir-literature. There is – as far as I see – only one exception: Orosius in his depiction of the war against the Cimbri and Teutones transmitted a fragment of Valerius Antias (5,16,4):[73]

> "octoginta milia Romanorum sociorumque ea tempestate trucidata, quadraginta milia calonum atque lixarum interfecta Antias scribit."

80,000 Roman soldiers and 40,000 *calones* and members of the baggage train were slaughtered. Here Valerius Antias gives the combined number of 120,000 dead Romans. But he does not use the number explicitly. And it is very important that he uses the combined number for nearly contemporary events; needless to say Sulla fought in the war against the Cimbri and Teutones.

The annalists used multiplications of numbers in older evidence. At this point, it is perhaps important to note that the results of these multiplications were lower than the numbers in the memoir tradition. In his use of the annalistic works, Livy was uncritical. He was not a sensible reader as defined by Lucian.[74] Livy took the inventions and exaggerations of the annalists for real, just with some short improvements and some critiques on Valerius Antias and Claudius Quadrigarius. But he, too, did not use the symbolic number of 120,000.[75]

Elsewhere the abnormal numbers in the time of Sulla were also incorporated – and mostly uncritically – by Greek authors of the late first

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porated contemporary history to a large extent. Uwe Walter interprets this convincingly: "Der starke Akzent auf der Zeitgeschichte beweist das Interesse nicht nur dieses 'Annalisten' am politischen Geschehen und zeigt, daß er in seiner Zeit wirken wollte und mit einem breiten Lesepublikum rechnete"; Walter, 2004: 348. This supports the thesis of an influence of exaggerations of contemporary self-representation and multiplications in annalistic texts.

71 Walter, 2004: 352.

72 Timpe, 1979: 112.

73 F 63 Peter = Beck / Walter, FRH II nr. 15,64.

74 It is interesting that Livy clearly reduced reports about brutal or horrible events. He avoided, as Erich Burck has shown, detailed descriptions of fights and killings, which were prominent in his sources (Claudius Quadrigarius or Dionysios of Halicarnassos); cf. Burck, 1964: 205. But Livy did not have problems with high numbers of dead enemies.

75 Cf. for example the list of used numbers offered by Ziolkowski, 1990: 35–36.

and second century AD: Plutarch and Appian. Maybe the use of exaggerated numbers and of the dramatically exaggerated contrasts of dead enemies and dead Romans – as seen in the case of Sulla in Plutarch – became very common in the reign of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius. This could be an explanation for the chosen example in Lucians polemic critique. A link between the historiographical memoirs in the first century BC and the Greek historical works in the second century AD is highly probable.

At this point, numismatic evidence can be used as an interesting parallel source. In the first half of the first century BC it became a fashion to show former family members on the reverse-sides of coins. In many cases the historic performance of family members were presented. For example in 71 BC the moneyer Mn. Aquilius released a denarius with a remembrance of his grandfather on the reserve-side who beat the slaves in Sicily in 100 BC (BMC I, 3364). In 81/79 BC a denarius of A. Postumius Albinus was struck, which shows on the reserve-side a member of the gens Postumia offering sacrifice to Diana (Sear, 2000: 239; BMC I, 2836). This is supposed to take place in 499 BC before the battle at the Regillus. Another denarius of A. Postumius Albinus presents a depiction of his ancestor L. Postumius Albinus who was praetor in 180 BC, on the reverse-side (Sear, 2000: 240; BMC I, 2839). He defeated the Lusitani and Vaccai in Spain. The alleged capture of a Carthaginian elephant by an ancestor of the Metelli family is shown on the reverse-side of coins released by the moneyer Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius in 77 BC (Sear. 2000: 241); the family built up a tradition of this motif (Sear, 2000: 287; BMC I, 1180, 1184). In 65 BC L. Manlius Torquatus struck a coin which highlights his ancestor T. Manlius who captured the torques of a fallen enemy (BMC I, 3511). In the coin legend the moneyer is called L(ucius) TORQVAT(us), he omitted his *nomen gentile* because he wanted to underline his famous family history by using only his cognomen. These few examples are sufficient. The historic exactness of these presentations was not always very reliable.[76] There are signs that some master of coins just embellished the past of their family. All in all, this is showing the same kind of behavior which is also recognizable in the contemporary memoir-literature of Sulla and the contemporary works of the younger annalistic tradition. For example Valerius Antias was not just – in the words of Livy – the greatest liar concerning numbers of fallen enemies, but he was often also very

[76] For Livy`s account of the famous single combat of Torquatus see for example Carter, 2008 who outlined some aspects of literary reshaping of the story.

liberal in his data and statements when men of the gens Valeria were the protagonist of his works; for example we can refer to the deeds of glory of his ancestors in the war against the Sabini in the sixth and fifth centuries BC.[77] Another author of the younger annalistic tradition, C. Licinius Macer, highlighted the history of his family in the social conflicts between patricians and plebeians in fifth and fourth centuries in the same way.[78] Maybe the coins also represent the spirit of the age in the first century BC. In this time a transformation of the past, a creation of "alternative facts" or maybe a self-improvement of someone's own family history was possible. The desire for self-representation and prestige, both derived from past events, was widely common in this time.

It is important here that we have knowledge of other autobiographical works which date to the beginnings of the first century BC: M. Aemilius Scaurus, a *princeps senatus* in his time, wrote three and P. Rutilius Rufus five books *de vita sua*. In 102 BC Q. Lutatius Catulus published a work *de consulate et de rebus gestis suis*. Although these works are lost, we can presume that they were used for self-representation. There was a young tradition in the first half of the first century BC and Sulla joined the ranks of these autobiographical authors.

One further example for this behavior in Late Republican Rome is Cicero. He wrote two different *commentarii* and a work *de consiliis suis*. He had strong needs of a historization of his own deeds of glory.[79] Beside some examples in his oeuvre we will here only concentrate on a letter sent by Cicero to L. Lucceius (fam. 5,12,3):

> "Itaque te plane etiam atque etiam rogo, ut et ornes ea vehementius etiam, quam fortasse sentis, et in eo leges historiae negligas […]."

Cicero's desire of a great and outstanding depiction of his own deeds is visible here. Furthermore, for Cicero it seems to be common to overdraw and exaggerate past time events for his self-representation. If one is thinking about the meaning – maybe normative meaning – of the mentioned *leges historiae*, he will directly come to the introductory cited statements of Lucian and Polybios at the beginning of this paper.[80] Even Cicero shared

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[77] Mehl, 2001: 63; cf. Dion. Hal. 5,37–39.

[78] Mehl, 2001: 64.

[79] Cf. Näf, 2010: 74–80 with more source examples; see also Gelzer, 1963: 308–309.

[80] Cf. Gelzer, 1935: 270 who believed that the Roman annalist did not follow this rule.

the opinion of Lucian and Polybios and gave what we can call a partial definition of *leges historiae* in de orat. 2,62:

> "Nam quis nescit primam esse historiae legem, ne quid falsi dicere audeat? Deinde, ne quid veri non audeat, ne qua suspicio gratiae sit in scribendo, ne qua simultatis?"

Historians are not allowed to give consciously distorted or wrong information. But if Lucceius will give false statements because he wants to highlight Cicero's own actions, then for Cicero the rules of writing history are very malleable. For him, it is also no problem to offer Lucceius the necessary sources (*commentarios rerum omnium*; fam. 5,12,10). Of course it is Cicero, not the historian Lucceius, who decides what is necessary material for the intended history.

The example of Sulla and Cicero, the evidence of Valerius Antias and L. Licinius Macer and the hints evident in the coinages give a good impression of the spirit of time or the *Zeitgeist* and of the untruthful approach to historiography in the late republic. In this time, the younger annalistic tradition and the memoir tradition started to exaggerate numbers.

Another impressive example for the desire of conducted or controlled historiography is the emperor Lucius Verus in the second century AD. He instructed Fronto to write a history of the Parthian War (Fronto, ad Verum Imp. 1,2);[81] the same war which is also was treated in exemplary fashion in Lucian's polemic critique (see the introduction). Beside the instruction to write a *historia*, Lucius Verus – as Cicero did – also took care of the available sources which Fronto should use.[82] He collected speeches, papers and other documents which he preliminarily commended for the use as historical sources. Furthermore, he ordered the eyewitnesses Avidius Cassius and Martius Verus to give reports which were usable as sources. It is also possible to recognize the main structure and intention of the historical description of his deeds. There should be some reference to lost battles and wars against the Parthians: The famous defeat of M. Licinius Crassus in Carrhae in 53 BC, the failures of M. Antonius in the 30s BC and even the losses of the *optimus princeps* Trajan in his war against the

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[81] Rosen, 1998: 81–82. For Lucius Verus and Fronto see also the analysis of Stoll, 2016, 105 with further literature. Besides the already mentioned *epistula* (ad Verum Imp. 1,2) the second usable source is the fragment of the so-called *principia historia*; cf. Kemezis, 2010: 290–291.

[82] Kemezis, 2010: 290.

Parthians were used for comparison. The goals of this comparison were pointed out convincingly by Oliver Stoll:

> "Was diese Stilisierung bezweckte, ist völlig klar: die Überhöhung der kaiserlichen Leistung und des aktuellen kaiserlichen Erfolges und Triumphes, auch und gerade im historischen Vergleich […]."[83]

Lucius Verus wanted to be portrayed as a better general than Trajan.[84] The defeated Parthians should be depicted as a very strong force, unbeaten by Roman troops for more than two centuries. We can see that historiography was deliberately transformed by desires of self-representation. It does not really seem to be credible that such personalized historical works could have been written *sine gratia aut ambitione* (Tac., Agr. 1,1). Kemezis emphazises that Fronto's history of the Parthian War of Lucius Verus would "undoubtedly have been extremely laudatory in tone".[85] It is absolutely clear that Lucius Verus behaved like earlier generals who celebrated their deeds and victories in historical works. For this purpose the use of exaggerated numbers – as criticized by Lucian in Antonine times – was a helpful and convenient instrument.

A final example for this kind of conducted or controlled historiography which was directly influenced by the wish to historicize self-representation is the younger Pliny. In one letter (7,33), he writes to Tacitus with the intention that the famous historian should also write something about Pliny's important deeds:[86]

> "Auguror nec me fallit augurium, historias tuas immortales futuras; quo magis illis (ingenue fatebor) inseri cupio. Nam si esse nobis curae solet ut facies nostra ab optimo quoque artifice exprimatur, nonne debemus optare, ut operibus nostris similis tui scriptor praedicatorque contingat?"

Pliny, like Cicero and Lucius Verus, wants to provide Tacitus with source materials; naturally it is clear that he wants to offer a specific selection, manipulated for self-representation. He therefore writes the transmitted letter and reports how he helped a friend who was unjustly accused because of majesty insult. This case was *in actis publicis* and Pliny's vindication was allegedly in common talk (*quae vox et statim excepta, et postea multo*

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[83] Stoll, 2016: 105.

[84] Kemezis, 2010: 294–295.

[85] Kemezis, 2010: 290.

[86] For Pliny's intention in general see Page, 2015: 271–272.

sermone celebrata est). But this was not enough for the "hero" Pliny who despite danger used his authority to save his friend:

> "demonstro ergo quamquam diligentiam tuam fugere non possit, cum sit in publicis actis, demonstro tamen quo magis credas, iucundum mihi futurum si factum meum, cuius gratia periculo crevit, tuo ingenio tuo testimonio ornaveris."

The end of the letter is in some way reminiscent of Cicero's *leges historiae*:

> "Haec, utcumque se habent, notiora clariora maiora tu facies; quamquam non exigo ut excedas actae rei modum. Nam nec historia debet egredi veritatem, et honeste factis veritas sufficit."

Although Pliny explicitly writes that Tacitus should not overdraw the real actions and that *historia* is dependent and acceded to *veritas* – which sounds like one of the *leges* – it is clear that he wants his own deeds highlighted. His own account of the affair was very likely overstated. A strong need of admiration is visible in the letter. And so the suspicion comes up that Pliny in narrating his own actions was free and easy with the facts.

The examples of Cicero, Pliny and Lucius Verus[87] clearly demonstrate that the frontier between historiography and subjective *commentarii* or memoirs is very diaphanous.[88] This leads to the most famous author of *commentarii*: C. Iulius Caesar.

3. Caesar and his use of numbers

In the third part of this paper, I will give some short notes on Caesar, who is a very special case as far as the question of numbers and wars in Roman literature is concerned. There are – besides Sulla in Plutarch and besides

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[87] Probably Lucullus is another example. Plutarch mentions that Lucullus wrote a history of the Marsic Wars in Greek (Lucull. 1). In addition, Plutarch also claims that Lucullus performed many brave and courageous deeds as a young man during the mentioned wars (Lucull. 2). It is very likely that Lucullus' historical work was a source for Plutarch; cf. Tröster, 2008: 28.

[88] This is also recognizable by the fact, that Cicero for example referred to *commentarii* as *historia*. Sulla's memoirs he called *Sulla historiae* (Cic., divin. 1,72; Plut., Mar. 35,4); cf. Gelzer, 1963: 308–309 and more critically Hampl, 1979: 169–170 with sources.

Lucian – only a few examples[89] in Roman historiography for unbelievable contrasts of high numbers of fallen enemies and low numbers of fallen Roman soldiers. One example is provided by Caesar. He describes his attack on the camp of the Usipetes and Tencteri in the fourth book of his *commentarii*. The enemies had an army of 430,000 men, but Caesar nevertheless won the battle (Bell. Gall. 4,15):[90]

> "nostri ad unum omnes incolumes perpaucis vulneratis ex tanti belli timore, cum hostium numerus capitum quadringentorum triginta milium fuisset, se in castra receperunt."

Only a few Roman soldiers were wounded, no member of the army of Caesar died. In reading this passage, one is immediately reminded of Sulla's huge success in the battle of Chaironeia and his memoir fragment transmitted by Plutarch. Another example is the battle of Utica in 49 BC (Caes., bell. civ. 2,25–2,36).[91] The enemies of Caesar lost 600 fallen and 1,000 wounded soldiers, while only one fighter of the Caesarian units died and no one was injured. As Franz Hampl has clearly shown in a universal-historical approach, Caesar stands in one tradition with the memoir-literature which had became fashionable since Sulla[92] and earlier authors like M. Aemilius Scaurus or P. Rutilius Rufus

Does Caesar use multiplications and transformation of numbers of fallen enemies in the same way like the annalist did? Or does he use exaggerations like Sulla? Or are there any other differences in his works? Most ancient writers had no neutral source for data about dead enemies, there was – besides the surviving Roman soldiers[93] – almost never a witness

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89 One more example is offered by Appian (bell. civ. 1,119). In his report about the war against Spartacus he mentions a victory of M. Licinius Crassus: Romans slew 6,000 enemies in the morning and many more towards evening. The Roman army had only three losses.

90 Ad locum: Gerlinger, 2008: 108–111; Gelzer, 1963: 324–325.

91 Cf. Gerlinger, 2008: 113–114 and 376. Gerlinger also gives some other comparable examples from the *Corpus Caesarianum* (112 and 114–124).

92 Hampl, 1979. He offers an investigation of different *res gestae*, *commentarii* and memoir-literature and compares for example self-representing accounts of Dareios, Sulla, Caesar, Augustus or Napoleon. Thus Hampl examines the subjective and intentional character of these texts. The use of exaggerations of numbers was an instrument for the expression of the author's intention.

93 In the cases studied in this paper surviving soldiers were not cited as sources by the ancient historians.

to battles. But in this case, Caesar is an exception. He – like Sulla, too – was an eyewitness of many battles he described afterwards. Generals had knowledge of force levels of their troops before and after the battle; but there was a degree of incertitude because many soldiers were lost or died only later of their wounds, after the elicitation of force levels of the troops or post-battle roll-call. Caesar often gives the statement that soldiers were *desiderati* or *amissi*; only in a few cases he uses the word *cecidere*.[94] This shows – as Karoline Resch has clearly shown – that troop numbers were tallied formally and by using specific documents with different status categories. But the possibility of having authentic numerical data after a battle, does not mean, that Caesar in fact gave the right information.[95] In some cases, he obviously exaggerated numbers. For example, in 57 BC his troops fought the Nervii and Atuatucii: The Celtic tribes lead 60,000 fighters into battle, only 500 survived and 53,000 Atuatucii were sold into slavery (2,28; 2,33). But in 54 BC these tribes could again supposedly field 60,000 warriors (5,39; 5,41; 5,49). And finally, in the battle of Alesia in 52 BC the Nervii are supposed to have send a force of 6,000 men (7,75,3).[96] These figures are obvious exaggerations. We have to make the same judgement for the general figures in the battle of Alesia: 80,000 Gauls are said to have been in the city with Vercingetorix and 250,000 men to have served in the relief force (7,71; 7,77; 7,76). These numbers are totally overstated and the use of contrasting figures of many enemies and only a few dead Romans is a simple instrument of self-representation. But we have to take a distinguished look at Caesar's use of numbers.

One aspect is noticeable, and again we have to observe a closed thematic context in the texts of Caesar. As Karoline Resch showed the numbers of fallen centurions are very high in relation to fallen *milites*.[97] In bell. civ. 3,64,4 Caesar reports that all centurions of a cohort have died; in another part of the *civil wars* he says that 32 centurions and five *tribuni militum* have fallen (3,71,1). And in bell. Gall. 2,25 he writes: *quartae cohortis omnibus centurionibus occisis* […]*, reliquarum cohortium omnibus fere centurionibus aut vulneratis aut occisis*. In this case, too, all centurions

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[94] Resch, 2010a: 123. In relation with his reports about the right of triumph Valerius Maximus (2,1) also proves that the counting of fallen Romans was – of course – necessary and common; cf. ad locum: Stoll, 2016: 101 and Resch, 2010b: 123–124.

[95] Resch, 2010a: 123.

[96] Gelzer, 1963: 313.

[97] Resch, 2010a: 123–127.

of two cohorts are dead or wounded. At first sight, this information seems easy to explain. Centurions were so-called *praepugnatores*. Their position in the first lines could be an explanation for the high percentage of dead *centuriones*. The higher mortality rate is explainable by the position of the centurions who fought in the van of their troops.[98]

How many centurions served in one legion? It is hard to ascertain the average ratio of *centuriones* to *milites* because the units were never on the same force level, there was a permanent variety. In the corpora of tablets, papyri and ostraca there are many documents which give impressions of this situation in imperial times – lists and report-documents for current force levels of military units are well attested in documentary evidence (for example O.Did. 63, P.Oxy. 73/4955 or Tab. Vindol. 2/154). Because of the variety of force levels it is hard to fix an average relation between centurions and normal soldiers. Maybe we can follow Karoline Resch and suggest a ratio of 1 *centurio* to 50 *milites* or 1 *centurio* to 60 *milites*. When we examine the whole *Corpus Caesarianum* and analyze all numbers of fallen soldiers in relation to the numbers of fallen *centuriones* something is noticeable: the risk of dying in a battle for a *centurio* was nearly twice as big as the risk of dying for a *miles*. As a rather drastic example, we can use the battle of Gergovia. Caesar led 30 cohorts into the fight. This means, as Resch has pointed out, that Caesar had around 180 *centuriones* and around 10,800 *milites* at his disposal.[99] This means a ratio of circa 1 to 60. Caesar reports 46 dead centurions and 700 dead soldiers, which represents a fatality rate of 25.6 % of centurions, but only 6.5 % of regular *milites*. The mortality rate of the centurions in the battle of Gregovia was four times higher than the rate of normal soldiers (25.6 : 6.5 = 3.9).

Another example is Caesar's victory at Pharsalus: 200 *milites* and 30 *centuriones* fell (bell. civ. 3,99). This leads to a mortality rate of 6.43 for centurions in comparison to normal soldiers.[100] Interesting at this point is that Appian – based on Caesar – reports the same information (bell. civ. 2,82). But Appian also writes that there were other authors who would state that 1,200 *milites* were killed at Pharsalus: In my view, the fact that

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[98] For this often stated explanation see Resch, 2010a: 123 and 125 with references to Goldsworthy, 1996: 258 and Lendon, 2005: 217–224. Goldsworthy and Lendon both emphasize the pugnacity or high exposure of centurions. However, it is not their personal desire of fighting, but rather their leadership position which lead to high casualty numbers.

[99] Resch, 2010a: 125.

[100] Resch, 2010a: 125; for the battle of Pharsalos see also in general Bichler, 2009: 27–29.

Appian himself followed the information of the *commentarii* of Caesar as a primary source is very important. In the same way, he followed the Sullanic memoir-literature (see above) which used the abnormal number of 120.000. So his critical remarks on those anonymous authors who dismissed Caesar's report of 200 dead *milites* and exaggerated the number to 1,200 make clear that Appian is following the data given by autobiographical authors. In the same way, he follows the memoir-tradition. Perhaps he just attributed higher authority to that special kind of evidence which was motivated by personal interests of its writers.

An analysis of all battle reports in the works of Caesar is not possible within this paper. Fortunately, it is also not necessary, as Karoline Resch already undertook such a study in an important paper about relative casualty numbers in the Caesarian corpus in 2010. She posits a mortality rate of 1.84 for centurions in comparison to *milites* for the whole *Corpus Caesarianum*.[101] This means that the chance of death for a centurion was nearly twice as high as for normal soldiers.

Finally, something else is interesting. The average rate of mortality corresponds with the pay scales in the late republic. Polybios (6,39,12) mentions that a *centurio* is entitled to double the pay of a *miles*. And Livy (45,40,5 and 43,7) says that a *centurio* had, in relation to a *miles*, rights to double the booty and double the rewards in case of a triumph;[102] comparable information is also attested in Bell. Alex. 43. What does this mean? What does it say about the number of fallen centurions in Caesar's historical reports? I think the comparison of the mortality rate and the payment scales indicate that the given numbers of fallen centurions and also the accounts of fallen *milites* are highly plausible and authentic: double risk, double payment.

Caesar was influenced by the memoir-literature of the Late Republic which used unbelievable exaggerations of numbers for self-representation. His depiction of the battle against the Usipetes and Tencteri demonstrates this clearly. Elsewhere, he gives more detailed information about fallen soldiers of his troops. As far as we can verify his figures, his reports of casualty figures of *centurions* and *milites* seem to be plausible. Even the total numbers of fallen Romans are not unbelievable.

But Caesar is, of course, an eclectic and multilayered author. Beside the obviously exaggeration and the realistic details of fallen centurions

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[101] Resch, 2010a: 127.

[102] Resch, 2010a: 126.

and soldiers there is a third subject which is very interesting: his use – or supposed use – of documentary evidence for numerical data. In his famous report about the number of Helvetii and their allies Caesar says that demographical registries written in Greek were found in the camps of the wandering tribes (bell. Gall. 1,29):[103]

> "In castris Helvetiorum tabulae repertae sunt litteris Graecis confectae et ad Caesarem relatae, quibus in tabulis nominatim ratio confecta erat, qui numerus domo exisset eorum, qui arma ferre possent, et item separatim pueri, senes mulieresque. Quarum omnium rerum summa erat capitum Helvetiorum milia ducenta sexaginta tria, Tulingorum milia XXXVI, Latobrigorum XIIII, Rauracorum XXIII, Boiorum XXXII; ex his, qui arma ferre possent, ad milia nonaginta duo. Summa omnium fuerunt ad milia trecenta sexaginta octo. eorum, qui domum redierunt, censu habito ut Caesar imperaverat, repertus est numerus milium centum et decem."

In these registries, armed fighters, old men, women and children were supposedly detected in specially divided units for the different tribes. But these figures that are given are highly unrealistic: 263,000, 36,000, 14,000, 23,000 and 32,000 respectively. The total number of 368,000 people is enormous and likewise implausible. What is interesting here is Caesar's attempt to verify his data. He pretends that he used documentary evidence, thus demonstrating the reliability of his information. This shows that Caesar knew the practice of a working historian. But for him the supposed practice of using documentary evidence is just a part of his self-representation. By feigning the working style, he puts himself in the same tradition as, for example, Polybios (see the introduction) or Thucydides.[104] But for the author of *de bello Gallico* it is all about subjective self-representation. Caesar's goal is totally clear. He wants to verify his data, because this data indirectly authorized his military actions. Finally, we have to return to the question of how numbers were used. The example of the wandering Helvetii and their allies demonstrates one more time that Caesar obviously was standing in the tradition of memoir-literature and he used exaggerations of numbers for his personal goals of self-representation.

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[103] This passage of the *commentarii* is much discussed; for example see the wise comments of Hampl, 1979: 175 or the fundamental critique of Delbrück, 1920: 554–561.

[104] For an arbitrary example of Thucydides' use of epigraphic evidence see Schuller, 1994: 74–75.

4. Conclusion

Numbers in Roman reports of war and battles are – of course – not generally reliable. The numbers of fallen enemies especially were often multiplied or otherwise transformed. Sometimes numbers and battles were invented. Therefore the critique of Lucian is absolutely justified. Perhaps the evidence of Lucian and the evidence of Plutarch, who used quotations of Sulla, indicates that the narrative instrument of contrasting very high numbers of fallen enemies and very low numbers of fallen Romans was an invention of the first half of the first century BC when it first appears in Roman literature. We can recognize a link of transmission between the literature of the late republic and the historiography of the second century AD. Autobiographical works of famous generals like Sulla and Caesar were used by Appian and Plutarch. In this way, the methods of contrasting high numbers of dead enemies and low numbers of dead Romans became common in the second century AD. Lucian criticized nameless historians who were using this method in his polemic essay.

How were numbers transformed and which historical foundation is discernible and visible? The evidence of the younger annalistic tradition shows that writers often multiplied numerical data which was given by Greek sources. Mostly, multiplications by four or five were normal. But in special cases – as we have seen in the case of Caesar – numbers are very plausible and authentic.

What was the purpose of this transformation? Different causes could be posited: the new triumph-law in the second century BC, or the rise of memoir-literature in the time of Sulla are clearly *censurae*. Both made it necessary for writers of the younger annalistic tradition to raise the numbers of fallen enemies to highlight the battles in the past, which otherwise seem to be less impressive when compared to the unbelievable performances of present times. Thus, autobiographical works which satisfied the desire of self-representation influenced Roman historiography which lead on occasion to a clear and deliberate transformation of past events. Exaggerations of numbers were often a result of this transformation.

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Introduction "War and Legitimacy"

Giovanni B. Lanfranchi & Sabine Müller

The main focus assigned to this panel of lecturers is to discuss how war was used for producing legitimacy both by and for the political leader(s) in ancient societies. Further, the organizers requested to emphasize the role of the institutional and/or political leaders whose position was precarious in their polity due either to the means by which they got their leadership (e.g., usurpation, civil war) or to the degree of competition for leadership existing in their own society. We would stress by now that such requests seem to be very apt for stimulating the development of the interdisciplinary and intercultural debate which is the main purpose of the *Melammu* project.

Given the long chronological interval, and the wide geographical extension of the cultures which developed in the area under scrutiny, we are faced with a high variety of political and institutional leaderships. Such a high variety depends on the characteristics and the qualities of the different kinds of organization of the states/polities which developed, flourished, coexisted, fought each other, and often disappeared. There were small village-based systems, city states, territorial kingdoms, supranational empires (whatever meaning may be assigned to this still very ambiguous term);[1] and each of them had a specific institutional organization, spanning from village-community and local chiefdom to hereditary monarchy and – in the West – even to what the ancient authors designated "democracy".

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[1] In modern scholarship, either specifically dedicated to the history of the Ancient Near East or more generally devoted to any other historical period / geographical area, the term "empire" is treated in very different and often contrasting ways, and is given extremely different institutional / ideological / geographical meanings. A general theoretical discussion among historians is strongly needed. For a concise survey, see most recently Liverani, 2017: x–xiii.

In this extremely variegated situation, and for the specific purposes of this panel, I would trace an artificial, albeit in my opinion unavoidable, basic differentiation between hereditary monarchy and all other institutions where the hereditariness of the political leadership is neither provided nor admitted. In hereditary monarchy, which is the only legal monarchic institution in the Ancient Near East, the legitimacy of the institutional leader, i.e. the "king", is granted only by a correct process of succession to the throne. That is, the king is a legitimate ruler only if his succession to the throne takes place according to established and acknowledged rules, the only exceptions being the non-existence of a legitimate heir to the throne or the result of civil strife.

According to the principle of hereditary rule, the legal institutional leader, the "King", is legitimate[2] in his royal role from the very moment of his installment as the reigning king – at the mere formal level, from his coronation – and neither needs, nor has to request or to obtain further legitimization. Thus, no kind of war, either victoriously conducted or resulting in a defeat, can formally de-legitimize the king's established right to rule until his death. In this perspective, war cannot be taken as an element capable of legitimating or de-legitimating the crowned king's right to reign. I shall mention three examples as regards Mesopotamia.

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[2] For the adjective "legitimate", the main English dictionaries have rather similar definitions, not necessarily referring to state institutions. The Online Cambridge Dictionary has 1. "allowed by law", 2. "reasonable and accepted". The Online Oxford Dictionary has: 1. "conforming to the law or to rules", with the sub-meanings a. "(of a child) born of parents lawfully married to each other" and b. "(of a sovereign) having a title based on strict hereditary right"; 2. "able to be defended with logic or justification; valid"; 3. "constituting or relating to serious drama as distinct from musical comedy, revue, etc.". The Online Merriam-Webster Dictionary has the following meanings: 1.a. "lawfully begotten"; 1.b. "having full filial rights and obligations by birth"; 2. "being exactly as purposed; neither spurious nor false"; 3.a. "accordant with law or with established legal forms and requirements"; 3.b. "ruling by or based on the strict principle of hereditary right"; 4. "conforming to recognized principles or accepted rules and standards"; 5. "relating to plays acted by professional actors". For our purposes, we shall apply to the institutional ruler (i.e. the "king") the meanings of "legitimate" listed as 1.b. in the Oxford Dictionary and as 3.b. in the Merriam-Webster; the Merriam-Webster meaning 3.a. is to be applied to "democratic" institutions, like the Greek states and cities.

First, the accession of UruKAgina[3] to the throne of the city-state Lagaš in the XXVth century BC. In his texts, he does not mention either his being the son of the previous legitimate king like all his predecessors or any other hereditary-familial succession. Instead, he merely states that the city-god had "selected" him for kingdom "among the myriad people", a sentence which has been generally taken as a clue to an irregular succession or even to a *coup d'état*.[4] It is easy to note that UruKAgina's legitimization is granted by the choice of the city-god, not by any other means like civil struggle against other pretenders.

Second, and most fitting, the case of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria (681–668 BC). In his texts he claims to have been forced to challenge his brothers to win the throne, enacting what he describes as his father's official choice. He moved towards Nineveh with his army for expelling his rebellious brothers, but he did not need to fight with his brothers' troops because, fearing him, the soldiers voluntarily abandoned their leaders and swore loyalty to him.[5] In this case too, war – civil war, indeed – is not invoked as a legitimization of the pretender to the throne in the battlefield; rather, it seems that here war is consciously discarded and dismissed as a legitimate mean to get the throne, although the latter had been illegally subtracted to the legitimate pretender.

Finally, we would refer to the inscription which, according to the official texts of Sargon II of Assyria, Rusa I, king of Urartu – his arch-enemy for many years – had incised on the pedestal of a statue representing himself the following short text:

> I got the throne of Urartu with my two horses and my one chariot.[6]

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[3] We adopt this "conventional" writing for this very controversial personal name.

[4] Cooper, 1986: 71, text no. 9.1: "When Ningirsu, warrior of Enlil, granted the kingship of Lagash to Uruʾinimgina selecting him from among the myriad people"; 74, text no. 9.2 col. iv "[Wh]en [Ningirsu, warrior of Enlil, granted Uruʾinimgina the kingship of Girsu?, select]ing [him from among myriads of people]"; 75 col. vii: "When [Uruʾinimgina] received [the kingship] in Girsu". The formula referring to the god's selection among myriads, however, is to be found also in an inscription of Enmetena, a predecessor of Uruʾinimgina: *ibid.*, 64: text no. 5.18 col. i: "[When …] he [select]ed him from [among] the myriad [pe]ople". In other texts, Enmetena mentions his being the legitimate son of the previous king: *e.g.*, *ibid.*, : text no. 5.4 col. I: "son of Enanatum ruler of Lagash".

[5] Leichty, 2011: 11–14, No. 1 col. I 1 – II 11.

[6] "Letter to the god Aššur", 404 (Mayer, 2013: 138): *i-na* 2 ANŠE.KUR.<RA>MEŠ-*ia ù* 1-*en* LÚ.GIŠ.GIGIR-*ia* LUGAL-*ut* KUR.*ur-ar-ṭi ik-šu-du qa-ti*.

On the condition that it really refers to a conflict/war which was fought during a dynastic strife[7] or a *coup d'état* in the Urartian state (like most scholars normally understand it), at first sight this sentence seems to attest that the Urartian king was truly legitimized as a king because he would have conducted a war or a military confrontation. We cannot forget, however, that this sentence is nothing else than a "negative description of the Enemy", a literary *topos* widely used in the Assyrian royal inscriptions which has the "Enemy" invariably depicted with all possible negative traits.[8] Consequently, this sentence must be understood as a conscious Assyrian de-legitimization of the king of Urartu, who is blamed for having ascended to the throne through irregular means. In this case too, war – we repeat, if strife or war is meant in the text as the background of Rusa's accession to the throne – does not legitimize the king; on the contrary, it makes him despicable in the eyes of a legitimate king.

In my opinion, in the ancient Near Eastern states the legitimization of the institutional ruler, i.e. the king, could not descend from his ability to conduct war, as it is commonly assumed especially for the kings of Assyria in the second and first millennium BC, but also for the Egyptian Pharaoh, and the Hittite kings. Instead, the image of the eternally victorious "warrior king" exhibited in the official celebratory texts seems to have been produced aiming at demonstrating the individual king's ability in performing one of his institutional *duties* – exactly like other mandatory duties such as granting correct cult and regular offerings, and building or duly restoring temples for the divinities, a subject which is amply stressed in all commemorative texts of the ancient Near East. Actually, strenuously fighting against the enemies, obtaining successes and victories in the battlefields, etc., are simply *compulsory duties* of the reigning king; and

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[7] Rusa I's irregular succession to the throne has been postulated by the first publisher of the text, F. Thureau-Dangin (1912: XVIII–XIX, with the foundation of a new dynasty), and was generally accepted, albeit with different accents as regards its modalities, in almost all successive studies. For a new, but in my opinion rather naïve, reconstruction of the events following the death of the legitimate Urartian king Sarduri II and the ascent to the throne of his son Rusa I, see Mayer, 2013: 50 (he supposes that Rusa rushed to reach the mountain temple of Muṣaṣir, where the coronation rituals of the Urartian kings were usually performed, while his brothers were discussing about the legitimate successor).

[8] Fales, 1982 (to be paired with Zaccagnini, 1982). The general guidelines for detecting the ideological framework of the Assyrian royal inscriptions were put forward by M. Liverani (1973; 1979).

performing in such a way, the victorious "warrior" king is doing nothing else than fulfilling his mandatory mission, that of defending his gods and his people. A legitimate king *must* fight and win; but kingship cannot be assigned to an individual simply because he is capable of fighting and he has been / is victorious in war. Basically, the legitimization of the ruler comes from the correct application of the established succession rules, not from the correct execution of war.

We would now reverse the question. If making war, and being a capable and victorious "warrior" are one of the king's duties, what happens if the legitimate king does not comply to this basic rule? Or better: does a military defeat or a bad conduct in war de-legitimize the legitimate king?

As far as we know, no Ancient Near Eastern commemorative text mentions this possibility – simply because any commemorative text is aimed at showing that the reigning king has performed his duties. In some very rare occasions, however, there are descriptions shaped in such a way so as to induce the modern reader to suspect that a defeat, or a stop, or a partial success is hidden under a specific set of rhetorical devices aimed at describing a victory – the most famous case is the description of the Battle of Qadesh in the texts of Ramses II, celebrated as a victory in his inscriptions but almost unanimously considered a defeat by modern scholars.

As for Assyria, we would mention again king Sargon II. Sargon was killed in the battlefield and his corpse was not recovered, a fact which – albeit not necessarily implying a military defeat as is generally assumed – should have been tremendously disruptive as regards the opinions about his capability to fulfill his royal duty as a "warrior king".[9] However, in the quasi-philosophical text known as "The sin of Sargon", it is suggested that Sargon met such a shameful destiny as a punishment for having committed an unpardonable sin, the neglect of the national god Aššur,[10] *not* for a thoughtless behavior or even for having been defeated and killed in the battlefield. Nevertheless, the legitimacy of Sargon as a king of Assyria was never doubted, and king Esarhaddon openly claimed in his texts to be his grandson and his direct descendant as a legitimate king of Assyria.[11]

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[9] S. Dalley ingeniously detected some traces of the "scandal" represented by Sargon's death in the battlefield and by the impossibility of recovering his corpse in the Gilgameš Epic (Neo-Assyrian version) and in the Bible (Isaiah): Dalley, 2007: 19–22.

[10] Tadmor / Landsberger / Parpola, 1993: esp. 48–49.

[11] E.g. Leichty, 2011: 26, no. 2, col. I, 6; 56, no. 10, 4; 68, no. 20, 6.

Turning now our attention to the Greek world, we would refer to the presentation of the Persian emperor Xerxes after his defeat in the campaign against Greece in 480 BC as given by Aeschylus in his tragedy "The Persians". Scared by dreadful unfavourable dreams, and suspecting that his son has met a bad destiny in his war against Greece, Xerxes' mother Atossa solemnly states:

> "Be assured that if my son should succeed, he would prove to be remarkable indeed; but if he fails, he does not have to answer to the state; if he returns safely, he will be in power in this land as he did before."[12]

In other words: the king cannot be de-legitimized by a military defeat or a bad conduct in war.

Admittedly, Aeschylus' sentence is structured according to a heavily ideological pro-democratic stance. Here the poet not too silently blames the absolute monarchy of the Persian empire, as opposed to the Athenian political structure where any authority or leadership could be dismissed because of governmental faults or mistakes. Nevertheless, Aeschylus duly represents – albeit criticizing it – the basic ideology of a hereditary monarchy, which has the king always legitimate after having been correctly designated and regularly crowned according to current succession rules.

In sum, war is not an instrument for the legitimation of the reigning king, because the king is fully legitimized since his very enthronement for reasons other than war. Rather, war is his unavoidable duty, which he must fulfill with the maximum of attention and valor so as to satisfy the gods and his people. The descriptions of this activity in the official texts is aimed at demonstrating the skill (the valor) of the king, as a true service he has to perform according to the function he has been assigned. In Salvatore Gaspa's lecture this "service" is amply described and discussed in detail.

At this point, we may reverse the problem and briefly discuss the problem of the legitimacy of war, either at the theoretical level or as a duty of the reigning king.

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[12] Aeschylus, *Persians*, vv. 211–214: εὖ γὰρ ἴστε, παῖς ἐμὸς / πράξας μὲν εὖ θαυμαστὸς ἂν γένοιτ᾽ ἀνήρ, / κακῶς δὲ πράξας, οὐχ ὑπεύθυνος πόλει, / σωθεὶς δ᾽ ὁμοίως τῆσδε κοιρανεῖ χθονός, as translated by Weir Smith, 1926. I offered a slightly different translation in Lanfranchi, 2003: 110* note 39 "(Xerxes), my son, if he acts well, would be a man to be admired. But, if he acts badly, he would not be responsible to the city (Susa); and, if he saves himself, he would still be the king of this country".

The literary texts commented by Simonetta Ponchia, the "Cuthaean Legend" and "Erra and Išum", clearly demonstrate that in the Mesopotamian culture the topic of war was discussed, and was also subject to some criticism, albeit rather cryptically or through difficult mythological symbolisms like in "Erra and Išum". It seems to me that these texts are mainly centered on the *manners* in which war is decided and performed (obviously by the king), and on its *effects*, rather than on the discussion about its legitimacy. As a matter of fact, these texts do not attempt to deny the neat ideological conflict between "good" and "evil" which lies behind the usual opposition between a positive center ("us") and a negative periphery ("the other"). Thus, they do not criticize the annihilation of the external countries through the instrument of war which logically derives from that opposition, since war (the war conducted by the legitimate king) is always depicted as a defensive war.

In this perspective, we would state that in the Ancient Near East war is *per se* a legitimate activity, on the condition that it is conducted against the "Other" and against the external periphery. We should not apply to the ancient world the contemporary concept of the "refusal" of war as a way to settle controversies between states.[13] As we know well, this is a really recent development, although it seems so obvious especially after the Second World War. According to the Mesopotamian texts mentioned above, the ways in which war is first decided and then conducted (by the legitimate king) bear direct consequences on its final results. The king must initiate and conduct war according to well established rules, and according to a detailed evaluation of the conditions of his state and of his people, and of the situation in the field.

As Simonetta Ponchia correctly states, war must not only be fought with never-ending enthusiasm and heroic strength; it also must be conducted according to the guidelines suggested by wisdom and knowledge, so as to avoid personal ventures, excesses, and offenses to the basic rules of the respect due to the gods. In short, the "warrior king" must also be a

[13] See simply the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations: "We the peoples of the United Nations determined: (…) to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind; and for these ends (…) to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest (…)". As it can easily be seen, the legitimacy of war is not at all denied in principle: war should be only avoided, although it can be legitimately performed for defending the "common interest".

"savior king". His real capability will be demonstrated by an intelligent and rationale combination of valor and wisdom.

All this, however, deals with *performance*, not with *legitimacy*. There is no question at all about the basic tenet that war is a legitimate way of relating with the "Other" if the legitimate king initiates, commands and fights it according to the correct application of established rules. Any infringement of these rules can bear devastating consequences; this, however, may happen because the king either does not understand, or even defies the will of the gods, which must regulate his behavior through the acquisition and the enactment of wisdom (which is a gift of the gods!). In other words: war is an absolutely legitimate instrument, but it must be managed with prudence and according to established rules. It is an exclusive prerogative of the legitimate king; he, however, must deeply ponder about the ways of performing war. A ruler who is granted the privilege of conducting war and who is not subject to de-legitimation in case of defeat or negatives outcomes: this is the image of the "Oriental" king that the Greeks had to deal with in their relations with the Phrygian, the Assyrian, the Lydian, and the Persian Achaemenid kings; and I am sure that *other* non-Oriental kings can be included in this short list.

Such image, at the end, is that of a substantial irresponsibility of the king as regards the effects of his behavior.[14] As such, it absolutely contrasts with the figure of the political or even institutional leader who is granted leadership through means other than hereditary succession, such as designation or election. This kind of leader is expected to conform always and fittingly to the requirements, demands or needs of those who selected and invested him – i.e., he *bears responsibility* for his activity. Thus, he can be a legitimate leader only if he is constantly scrutinized, and especially until he is fully approved; and this implies that he can be discarded in any moment of his leadership.

Such an opposition between the "Oriental irresponsible king" and the "Greek responsible leader" is fundamental in the relations between the two worlds, and represents a true marker of political and cultural differentiation, which was productive of intense and long-standing meditations and debates in the medieval and modern Western cultures.

Also in Classical and Hellenistic times, in which the other two exemplary cases of this section occurred, war was linked closely with questions and

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[14] Lanfranchi, 2003. For a slightly divergent opinion see Pongratz-Leisten, 2013. The basic arguments were put forward by Tadmor, 1986.

representation of legitimacy. Generally speaking, war could serve as a means to create legitimacy, thus triggering definitions of and discussions about what is legitimate and what is not, while simultaneously war was associated inevitably with questions of legitimacy because warfare and military campaigns needed justification, hence a notion of legitimacy. The Athenian politician and Peripatetic philosopher Demetrius of Phalerum stated that a declaration of war that can be labeled just makes both victories appear greater and failures less dangerous while one that leaves a bad impression serves the opposite.[15] In addition, according to the ideological idea that military victories were granted by divine will, thus proving for the victor's favor with divine forces, legitimacy can be demonstrated by military deeds or, on the contrary, doubted in case of military defeats. Furthermore, war established new structures of legitimacy as the superior political actors are in the position to define what is legitimate and what is illegitimate.

Greek sources for Classical and Hellenistic times mirror the common idea that besides inheritance, purchase and donation, victory in war legitimizes the annexation of the property of the defeated.[16] The contemporary debate on the rightful possession of the former Athenian *apoikia* Amphipolis (founded in 437/436 BC in the fertile Strymon valley and lost to Athens already in 424/423 BC) after the city was conquered by Philip II in 357 BC is an instructive example.[17] In a letter forming part of the *Corpus Demosthenicum*, allegedly written by Philip II (but mostly attributed to the Greek writer Anaximenes of Lampsacus who lived at the Argead court),[18] the certainly genuine contemporary argument occurs that the occupation of Greek cities were either legitimated by inheritance from the owner's ancestors or by right of conquest in war.[19] (Erroneously) claiming that in the 5th century BC Philip II's ancestor Alexander I first occupied the site, and stressing that in the 4th century BC Philip captured the city after its inhabitants expelled the Athenians, the author emphasizes

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[15] *BNJ* 228, F 29. Notably, Polybius (36.2.3) cites these words writing about the Roman declaration of war against Carthage in the Third Punic war.

[16] Thuc. 4.98.2–3: Any object taken by means of military conquest becomes the property of the victors. Cf. Chaniotis 2005: 457.

[17] Foundation: Thuc. 1.100.3; 4.102.3; 4.108.1; Diod. 12.32.3; 12.68.2; Polyaen. 6.53. Loss: Thuc. 4.103.1–3; 4.107.2–3. Macedonian Conquest: Diod. 16.8.2; Polyaen. 4.2.17.

[18] *BNJ* 72, F 41. Cf. Ceccarelli, 2013: 166–167; Pearson, 1960: 245.

[19] [Dem.] 12.22.

the importance of the question who originally conquered the territory.[20] This also applies to Aeschines' statement in the context of the debate on Amphipolis while taking the opposite stand. He argued that, as the district and place of Amphipolis' foundation was originally in possession of one of the sons of Theseus who received it as his wife's dowry, Philip did not keep the place rightfully for he took it in war not against the Athenians but from Amphipolis' inhabitants who did not own it.[21] Hence, as the example shows, the past or constructions of the past play a pivotal role regarding the complex relationship and interdependence of war and legitimacy. Even conquests of mythical ancestors had to be justified retrospectively by some legitimizing pretext in order to use them as tools in political discourse. As a watershed in Greek and Macedonian history in multiple ways, the Macedonian expansion in its unforeseen dimension and the subsequent wars of Alexander's Successors triggered definitions and representations of the connections between war and legitimacy. The two articles by Frances Pownall and Daniel Ogden are set against this specific socio-political background addressing different exemplary issues associated with this phenomenon.

In her enlightening study on a pioneer of panhellenic self-fashioning before Philip II and Alexander III made use of this image in context of promoting the Persian campaign, Frances Pownall analyzes the strategies employed by Dionysius I of Syracuse in order to legitimize his seizure of power in Syracuse by styling himself as Syracuse's avenger and liberator of the Sicilian Greeks from the foreign (Carthaginian) foe. She points out the discrepancy between Dionysius' propagandistic claims that he waged war only on behalf of the freedom of the Sicilian Greeks rather than to further his own ambition and his political actions thereafter clearly serving to consolidate his position. Furthermore, the panhellenic propaganda theme proved to be a mere illusion: While posing as a guardian of Greek freedom against the "barbarian", Dionysius did not treat the Greeks and non-Greeks of Sicily any differently. This interesting aspect illustrates a characteristic element of ancient rule in general: To be or not to be a "barbarian" is a matter of definition by the ruling classes. While the claim to bring freedom is a universal theme in warfare that always seems to sell, Frances emphasizes another major element of ancient legitimization: Dionysius styled himself as a divinely supported protector

[20] [Dem.] 12.21.

[21] Aeschin. 2.31–33.

of the Western Greeks from the impious Carthaginian "barbarians" using propagandistic means such as prophecies and dreams to create an aura of divine predestination. According to Frances, by coining new definitions of legitimacy connected with warfare while simultaneously drawing upon traditional symbols, Dionysius left a blueprint that might have come to the minds of Philip II, Alexander III and their advisers.

Dionysius' self-fashioning as a divinely chosen ruler links this article with Daniel Ogden's profound study on the legitimizing tales about one of the most successful among Alexander III's *diadochoi*, Seleucus I. Convincingly arguing that at the base there was a legendary biography for the founder of the Seleucid Empire composed in a fictionalized and romantic style resembling the *Alexander Romance*, Ogden shows that divine intervention and a sense of destiny play a pivotal role. Therefore, major elements are omens, oracles, prophecies and dreams. Interestingly, Ogden points out that while Seleucus' prime source of legitimacy was military success, grand narrations of field battles are absent. However, he concludes that there are no significant treatments of warfare lost from the legend but one has to change one's perspective while looking for it: the focus is on the heroic warrior king himself, thus on Seleucus' role within and around the grand battles as well as on the outcome of the battles as divine will. In the absence of blood, sweat and toil, the emphasis is on mystical acts of predestination. This specific feature reminds of the epigrams of the Milan Papyrus attributed to Posidippus of Pella writing under Ptolemy II in the 3rd century BC. Regarding Alexander and the Macedonian conquests, while war is a central theme, explicit battlefield scenes are absent: the focus is on Alexander as the god-sent warrior king.[22] Perhaps, this literary device characterizing also the legend of Seleucus was one way to come to terms with the cruelties of war: when legitimizing a campaign retrospectively, the negative, dark and real elements of war such as blood, death, mutilation, loss, destruction, pain, are dropped in favor of a symbolical and aitiological interpretation focusing on the heroic leader.

Summing up, as the two case studies from Classical and Hellenistic times show, liberation, revenge and divine support are key themes in legitimization through war or legitimization of war are – flexible enough to be made compatible with the specific political situation.

[22] Müller, 2015: 157–158.

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The Assyrian King as a Warrior: Legitimacy through War as a Religious and Political Issue from Middle Assyrian to Neo-Assyrian Times

Salvatore Gaspa

Do you think that I have come to attack this place
and destroy it without the consent of the Lord?
No; the Lord himself said to me, 'Attack and destroy it.'

2Kings 18,25

The political history of the ancient Near East offers many examples of how the motif of war was used by communication experts in the service of royal power to structure political discourse. A peculiar elaboration of this motif in terms of god-supported heroism of the king found its way in the political discourse that accompanied the expansionist project of Assyria in the late second and first millennia BC. It played a crucial role in the formation of the imperial ideology in the framework of an elaboration of former ideological concepts in connection with new ambitious programs of territorial expansion. More importantly, the political and religious construct centered on the king's heroism worked as a factor of legitimation of the king's position. Assyria emerged as an empire in the first millennium BC as a complex result of ideological, religious, political and institutional developments which are all rooted in the history of this North Mesopotamian polity from the second millennium BC onwards. The mission of territorial expansionism was an integral part of the policy of Middle and Neo-Assyrian kings. During the coronation ceremonies, Assyrian kings were commanded by the gods to enlarge the "Land of (the god) Aššur" (*māt Aššur*). War represented a powerful means for the legitimation of political leaders in the ancient Near East, and this was especially true for the Assyrian kings. The royal annals and the iconographic sources which enable historians to reconstruct the idea that the Assyrians' mission was to enlarge the *māt Aššur* are replete with descriptions of the

warlike traits of the Assyrian rulers, of their extraordinary capabilities as god-supported warriors and the impact Assyrian conquests had on foreign countries and people. The idea that war is used to consolidate the political position of the leader is not a novelty in Mesopotamia and in the ancient (or indeed the modern) world, and in this paper I will focus on a number of aspects which illustrate how legitimacy through war was created in the representation of the royal power in Assyria.

In the second millennium BC, Assyria – originally a region consisting of small city-states – became a player in the *Realpolitik* of the Bronze Age international system, and by the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC it had succeeded in creating a strong regional state in Upper Mesopotamia, bringing about the eclipse of Mitanni and Kassite Babylonia, two protagonists of the second millennium political scenario. In this period Middle Assyrian kings were able to attain full international recognition for Assyria and this situation favoured the launching of an ambitious hegemonic project for the Land of Aššur.[1] The massive military and economic activism of Middle Assyrian rulers concerned the protection of the Assyrian heartland from the peoples of the mountain regions that encircled it from northwest to northeast, gaining control over the East Tigris area and taking profit of the territories and the resources acquired through the successful territorial expansion in the West.[2] The Dark Age represented a caesura in the political and institutional development of Assyria into an imperial structure, but in the ninth century BC a new phase began for the Assyrian state. Assurnaṣirpal II (883–859 BC) launched campaigns in all directions of the Assyrian core region, replacing local ruling elites with his own administrators. A further crucial development followed under the energetic policy of Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 BC), who began an unprecedented phase of state expansion. He also improved the administration system through the introduction of provincial governments, and created a permanent standing army. Tiglath-pileser crowned himself king of Babylonia, a measure followed by his sons Shalmaneser V (726–722 BC) and Sargon II (722–705 BC). With the Sargonids, from Sargon II to Assurbanipal (668–631? BC), the Assyrian state reached the zenith of its power and territorial expansion. After the aggressive policy followed by

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[1] On the recognition of Assyria's international status in the second millennium BC see Artzi, 1997: 3–5.

[2] A historical reconstruction of the phases of the expansion of the Middle Assyrian state is given in Jakob, 2017: esp. 122–140 with previous literature.

Sennacherib (705–681 BC) towards Babylon, Esarhaddon (680–669 BC) promoted a pro-Babylonian policy and continued to suppress revolts in southern Mesopotamia and elsewhere. With the Sargonid rule – and especially under Assurbanipal's reign – the Empire was at its political and economic height: a situation that justifies the definition of the period from the late eighth to the late seventh century as the *pax assyriaca*, a period of stability and order in the entire Near Eastern region under the dominion of the Assyrians.[3] No doubt this state of affairs had been brought about by an uninterrupted period of war led by generations of Assyrian rulers. But how was war politically used to legitimate the ruling king? How was war used in Assyria to convey and underline the concept of the legitimate power of the Assyrian king? In order to understand legitimacy and self-representation of the royal power in Assyria we will consider these questions in greater detail. We will see how the strategy of constructing legitimacy through the motif of war in the Assyrian political discourse made use of various themes and media in order to adapt the message to the changing political situation in the country and the expectations of the elite.

1. Constructing the Legitimacy of the King's Power through Warlike Imagery

The narrative emphasis on military exploits and violence against conquered cities and peoples that we encounter in Assyrian royal inscriptions and visual art has to a large extent determined the bad reputation that the Assyrians have in the eyes of modern historians. However, this brutality can be seen as an integral part of a coherent strategy of political communication, the purpose of which was to consolidate the internal consensus to the king's policy and show the inevitable consequences for those who did not submit to the Assyrian monarch. We may wonder whether this emphasis on the warlike imagery of the Assyrian king and the narrative focus on war was linked to a demand for legitimation in Assyria. Basically, the authority of each Assyrian king rested on his descent from previous kings[4] and from his

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[3] For an overview on the Neo-Assyrian history see more recently Frahm, 2017: 165–193 with previous literature. On the concept of *pax assyriaca* see Fales, 2008: 17–35 and Fales, 2010: 219–228.

[4] The establishment of the hereditary principle in royal power transmission was one of the major changes that occurred in second-millennium BC Assyria. The emphasis on royal genealogy was not absent in Old Assyrian times (see, e.g., the examples cited in Karlsson, 2016: 317 n. 318), but it seems that it was more systematically employed

adhesion to the traditional royal mandate to rule the *māt Aššur*. Although royal genealogy is shown in royal inscriptions as a source of legitimacy, it seems that it was considered insufficient to convey the idea that the person on the throne was the legitimate and righteous leader for the expansive project of the *māt Aššur*. Accordingly, the Middle and Neo-Assyrian ruling elites felt the political necessity to re-formulate the state ideology through a re-consideration of the role of the king and his mission. The fulfilment of this royal mandate was expressed in political texts and public visual art in religious terms. By tradition, the Assyrian king also bore the priestly title of *sangû*: he was the supreme priest of Aššur, the national god of the Assyrians and head of the Assyrian pantheon. In the eyes of the Assyrians this institutional function linked the king with the divine world, and more importantly demonstrated that the priestly power was an integral part of the royal power embodied in the king's person.[5]

The depiction of the king as a warrior is the main trait of the royal imagery emerging from the royal annals that describe the king's military campaigns as well as the monumental art that resulted from large-scale artistic and cultural programs promoted by the Middle and Neo-Assyrian kings in their capitals. This is a theme that differentiates Middle and Neo-Assyrian state ideology from its Old Assyrian counterpart. The Middle and Neo-Assyrian king is portrayed as a righteous warrior whose actions are aimed at re-establishing and maintaining the authority of Aššur and the "Great Gods" of Assyria over the world. Anyone who refused to submit to the supreme Assyrian god or who betrayed his loyalty to him became a sinner and an evildoer in the Assyrian political discourse.[6] The Assyrian king was seen to be directly armed and supported by the gods to punish their enemies. From this ideological perspective war becomes the

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from the Middle Assyrian period onwards. For Sargonid attestations see Sargon II's claim to be "of Assyrian lineage" in his account of the eighth campaign in Foster, 2005: 797 and Esarhaddon's mention of his royal descent from "the eternal line of Bēl-bāni, king of Assyria" in RINAP 4, 47: 4'. Descent from the male line of a specific family – that could trace its ancestry back to the rulers of the second-millennium BC city-state of Aššur– was one of the prerequisites of Assyrian kingship. See Radner, 2010: 26, 27.

5 On the title of *sangû* see Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 202–205.

6 This moral connotation of enmity is peculiar to narratives of the royal inscriptions and is an integral part of the anthropological binary opposition characterizing on one side the "Land of Aššur" and its king and, on the other side, the enemy country and its political leader. See on this aspect Fales, 1982: 425–435.

means by which justice and order are re-established.[7] To accomplish such matters, the king acts as the representative of the gods in the form of a divine warrior, and his deeds – which are always referred to as heroic – are characterized by exceptional physical traits and moral qualities endowed upon him by the gods. The brutality of his deeds against enemies underlines the idea that the Assyrian king embodied a moral force that distinguished right from wrong and that all his wartime actions were necessary to fulfil the divine mandate to extend the country and consolidate the gods' order. Submitting to the will of Aššur and the Assyrian gods through full acceptance of the Assyrian king's dominion meant the same thing; peace, order and justice could only be established in the conquered country through unswerving loyalty to Aššur and his earthly representative. These ideas were formulated into a coherent ideological system[8] in the Middle Assyrian period and were further developed in the Neo-Assyrian period, when the Assyrian state reached unprecedented levels of expansion in all the directions of the Near Eastern region.

The warlike image of the ruler and the conceptualization of war as a divine mission entrusted to the king defined the response of the Assyrian elite and the demands of the upper social strata of Assyria to any given political situation. Any threat – real or presumed – from the enemy lands adjacent to Assyrian territory was seen as justification for the Assyrians' military response, which usually took the form of a defensive imperialism, motivated by the king's divine right to intervene against evildoers.[9] From this perspective, it is not hard to see how Assyrian royal inscriptions from the late Middle Assyrian period developed into a fully-developed narrative genre with a militaristic focus: both the year-by-year narrative and the detailed description of the king's heroism in the battlefield were aimed at showing his fulfilment of the divine mandate and thus his full legitimacy to rule the Land of Aššur.[10] Indeed, the militaristic and heroic orientation

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7 Oded, 1992: 36–42, 124–135.

8 On the essentials of the ideological system characterizing the Assyrian Empire see Liverani, 1979: 297–317; Garelli, 1981: 1–11; Tadmor, 1999: 55–632. The Assyrian notion of kingship and the political discourse it created has been discussed in full in Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 198–218. See more recently also Liverani, 2017a: 536–541 with further references.

9 On the "defensive" character of the Assyrian imperialism see Liverani, 2017b: 120 with previous literature.

10 Oded, 1992: 145–146. As a divine hero, the Assyrian king can continue the gods' acti-

is the major peculiarity of the Assyrian royal inscriptions and shows the worries of the Assyrian ruling elite about ideological justification of their aggressive foreign policy. As it has been observed, the royal inscriptions consist of a variety of texts and ways of presenting the king's deeds and reveal the continuous adjustment of the political message to the expectations of different audiences.[11] From Middle Assyrian to Neo-Assyrian times, the parallel development of epic literary texts aimed at celebrating the king's military achievements shows the other side of this massive investment in political literature praising the warrior king. The few – and unfortunately fragmentary – epic texts from Neo-Assyrian court literature witness to the re-consideration of military might and the victorious exploits of the Assyrian king in a "genre" which is more heavily characterized by literary devices than the narratives of the contemporary royal annals.[12]

The fulfillment of the king's function as a righteous divine warrior legitimatises his claim to universal dominion and enables him to consolidate his authority within the ruling class. We can observe this by considering the most energetic king of the Middle Assyrian period, Tukultī-Ninurta I (1243–1207 BC), whose military achievements covered every frontier of the Assyrian kingdom, and especially Babylonia. The betrayal by Kaštiliaš IV (1232–1225 BC), the Kassite king who broke the oath sealed between the two kingdoms after Adad-nērārī I's victory at Kār-Ištar, offered Tukultī-Ninurta the perfect opportunity to show himself as the warrior of the gods who punishes the evildoer. He conquered Babylon and became king of the territories that had formerly belonged to the Kassites. His conquest of Babylonia was crucial for legitimising his claims of "universal dominion" over a land extending from the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea – a longstanding political ideal in Mesopotamia. In terms of political imagery, the control of Babylon – the most prestigious centre of religious and literary traditions – represented an important element in the construction of the message of universal dominion and

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vity in creating and ordering the world. See Pongratz-Leisten, 2001, 229–230. On the major peculiarities of the Assyrian royal inscriptions see Tadmor, 1997: 325–338. Different methodological approaches in the classification and study of the Assyrian royal inscriptions are described in Fales, 1999–2001: 115–144.

[11] See the analysis of the rebellion of Jaubi'di of Hamath in Sargon II's royal inscriptions in Galter, 1988: 76–81.

[12] See texts SAA 3, 17–24. The most preserved of these texts concern Shalmaneser III's campaign against Urarṭu and Assurbanipal's Elamite wars.

restoration of the ancient unity of Mesopotamia (which had been achieved in the past by the kings of Akkad). However, the second strategy of royal legitimatisation concerned an unprecedented change in the political and institutional milieu. By moving the capital from Aššur to the new city of Kār-Tukultī-Ninurta, Tukultī-Ninurta I probably intended to break the traditional power balance between the major components of the Assyrian ruling elite, especially the relationship that linked the royal house with the priestly class of the Aššur Temple and the Assyrian aristocracy running the state apparatus of that city.[13] Moving the capital was also an attempt to bring the political centre of the Assyrian state closer to Babylonia – a decision that was probably in contrast to that of Shalmaneser I (1274–1244 BC), who founded the city of Kalḫu. The conspiracy that ended Tukultī-Ninurta's reign can be seen as a clear indication of the importance the Assyrian ruling elite placed on to the balance between universalist and imperial dominion (and the consequent increase in the authoritative power of the king within the Assyrian elite) on one hand, and the internal cohesion of the ruling class on the other hand. Some of the components of the ruling elite probably disapproved the war against Babylonia, a victorious event that Tukultī-Ninurta celebrated in his famous poem. Throughout Assyrian history we can observe the tendency to follow the paradigm of the construction of king's legitimacy in the political discourse through militaristic activism and, at the same time, the tendency to ground that legitimacy in a personalistic and authoritative power. However, this approach often clashed with the expectations and interests of some groups of the Assyrian ruling class. The former tendency, namely the militaristic ruling paradigm, is inscribed into the traditional political culture of the Assyrians since the Middle Assyrian period, while the latter phenomenon is peculiar to phases of marked innovation affecting the institutional, cultural and political spheres under the king's personalistic exercise of power.

This balance of power is a central theme of the Middle Assyrian coronation ritual,[14] which delineates the relationships linking the king to the major institutions of state and society. These institutions are represented by high officials, through a ritualized exchange of gifts. The coronation ceremony took place in the Aššur Temple. Here, the priest of Aššur slapped the king's face in the presence of state officials, proclaiming

[13] Liverani, 1997: 587–588.

[14] The text for the coronation ritual has been recently re-edited by S. Parpola as SAA 20, 7.

twice that "Aššur is king".[15] A series of offerings followed this stage of the ceremony which ended with the act of coronation, performed by the priest in person. The blessings uttered by the *sangû* remind the king that the owners of his crown are Aššur and his consort Mullissu and that the king's priesthood had to be pleasant to Aššur. More importantly, the priest's blessings contain the command to expand the country under a just sceptre.[16] Expanding the borders of the *māt Aššur* as a king's prerogative under the gods' command had been since Adad-nērārī I (1307–1275 BC) onwards a structural component of the Assyrian state ideology and policy.[17] This represented a turning point in the Assyrian theology, since the mission to enlarge the borders of the *māt Aššūr* went beyond the ensuring the well-being of the country; it also affected a different appreciation of the role of the inner country and its main god.[18] The Middle Assyrian novelty was to re-think the role of the national god and his human representative in the framework of an ambitious project of territorial expansion of the country seen in theological terms: royal annals and other official texts present the expansive policy of Assyrian kings as a religious duty. In this project legitimation of the ruler was constructed through the combination of divine choice and dynastic continuity.[19] The logic consequence of conceptualizing the *māt Aššūr* as the cosmic centre and of assigning the king the function of extending the positive and cosmic attributes of Assyria to the surrounding countries was that such a superhuman task could only be performed by a king with superhuman qualities. The royal sceptre is among the precious gifts donated by the gods to the Assyrian king. The "just sceptre" – a metaphor for the wise rule of the country – was only possible thanks to the gifts that Aššur gives to the king: "command, attention, obedience,

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[15] SAA 20, 7 i 27'–29'. The idea of the kingship of the supreme Assyrian god on the country is a fundamental concept in the articulation of the Assyrian state ideology. In a bilingual psalm to Aššur for King Tukultī-Ninurta I this concept is expressed in the following words: "O Aššur, great lord, king of the Anunna-gods, the land of Assyria is yours!" (Foster, 2005: 320).

[16] SAA 20, 7 ii 35. See Galter, 2014: 329 for discussion.

[17] This is also evident from the use of epithets referring to this prerogative in Assyrian royal titulary. See Cifola, 1995: 26 on the epithet *murappiš miṣrī u kudurrī*, "extender of borders and boundaries". The titles assumed by Adad-nērārī I became the standard titles of the Assyrian rulers. See Cifola, 1995: 27 and Faist, 2010: 17.

[18] Liverani, 2017a: 537.

[19] Fales, 2010: 77.

truth and peace".[20] Analogous divine gifts are also given to Assurbanipal in the coronation ceremony, according to a hymn celebrating this event.[21] Also his great grandfather, Sargon, stated to have been imbued with these divine gifts: he defines himself as "the legitimate king who speaks only propitious words, to whom treachery is abhorrent, whose mouth utters nothing wicked or destructive, the wisest ruler in the universe, who was born with good sense and reason".[22] After this blessings-part of the ritual, the Middle Assyrian coronation ceremony dictates that every official prostrates himself before the monarch and presents his own audience gift to him. The king then confirms each of their royal offices and its relevant function.[23] In all likelihood, this ritualized representation of the kingship as balance of power probably expressed an idealised vision of the Assyrian royal power system and the king's position at the head of it, since the everyday ruling practice was characterized by an increasing absorption of functions into the king's person to reduce the degree of internal opposition and thus consolidate cohesion within the Assyrian elite. High-ranking Assyrians who had access to military and administrative roles were part of the local aristocracy, a social group composed of landowners who had increased their riches thanks to the development of agriculture under the state economy and the acquisition of land through royal grants. These individuals strongly benefitted from the policy of territorial expansionism launched by kings in various areas. In return for their loyalty and service, Assyrian families received agricultural land via royal concessions. The documentation from various agricultural centres such as Dūr-Katlimmu, Ḫarbu, Tell Sabī Abyad and others confirms that large investments were made by the Assyrian state in the agricultural exploitation of the Assyrian countryside.[24] Seen from the perspective of the central role agriculture played in Middle Assyrian imperialistic policy, the duty to extend the land that, according to the coronation ritual, was charged on the monarch, not

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[20] SAA 20, 7 ii 35–36. These lines are also translated in Foster, 2005: 334.

[21] SAA 3, 11: 8: [8]*qa-bu-ú še-mu-ú ket-ʾtiʾ me-šá-ru* [*a-na ši*]-*rik-ti lu šar-ku-šú*, "May eloquence, understanding, truth and justice be given to him [as a g]ift!" Assurbanipal's coronation hymn clearly shows that the essential elements of the Middle Assyrian enthronement ritual were still in use in the Neo-Assyrian period. On Assurbanipal's coronation hymn see Livingstone, 1989: xxiii–xxiv and Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 214–217.

[22] The translation of these lines follow Foster, 2005: 797.

[23] SAA 20, 7 r. iii 2–14.

[24] See Cancik-Kirschbaum, 1996; Röllig, 2008; Salah, 2014.

only refers to extending state territory beyond the traditional Assyrian heartland, but also implies extending and developing arable land (both private-tenured land and state-run farms). Farmland was the primary state resource and its major sector for economic investment. Accordingly, this represented a powerful argument to consolidate consensus to the imperial project within the class of the Assyrian landowners.

War did not only constitute a key element in the political and literary imagery of the Assyrian ruling king. In the form of a ritual re-enactment of mythical combats, it also came to structure royal rituals, the execution of which required the participation of the king in person. These rituals served to further ground the monarch's claims to universal dominion in the state theology and cultic practices. Cultic practices involving the king were another field in which the Assyrian notion of kingship and the resulting political discourse were formulated and developed to legitimise the king and the imperial project.[25] The cultic connection of the Assyrian king to the temples of the country was made manifest principally through the king's priesthood, an office that expressed the role of the monarch as steward of the supreme Assyrian god. With the political and territorial development of the Middle Assyrian state, the ideological meaning of the king's *sangûtu* was adjusted to the new political situation and progressively became a synonym for *šarrūtu*.[26] The heroic connotation of the king and his role that was at work in the state ideology since the second millennium BC affected this priestly office, making the *sangûtu* instrumental to the state's expansive project: by intertwining cultic duties and warlike traits in the royal priestly office, the priesthood of the Assyrian king could be interpreted in theological terms as the earthly counterpart of Ninurta's role in his relationship with Enlil.[27] Royal rituals represent another important medium used to convey the king's legitimacy through warlike imagery.[28] The motif of the "warrior of the gods" as a religious construct in Assyrian imperial culture led to the identification of the king's martial role with that

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[25] The evidence of royal rituals in connection with the Assyrian royal ideology is treated in Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 379–447.

[26] Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 204.

[27] On this aspect see Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 205.

[28] Especially those which were performed in the premises of the major temple of the country, the Aššur Temple in Assur. In this city – the traditional seat of Assyrian *šarrūtu* – the intertwined functions of the Assyrian king as supreme priest, viceregent and heir to the throne were made manifest through his participation to religious ceremonies.

of certain martial gods: this resulted from cultural tendencies rooted in the royal ideology of the Middle Assyrian period that were further developed in the first millennium, when a large-scale project of territorial expansion of the Land of Aššur was launched. The tendency at work may be explained on one side as the concentration of a number of functions in the king's person, and, on the other side, as a development of the divine mandate concept. The former aspect led to a reconsideration of the royal persona as the embodiment of the institution of state and as the realization of the god-sanctioned rule of the Land of Aššur. This latter aspect resulted from a re-working of the king's traditional functions as steward (*iššiakku*) and high priest (*sangû*) of the national god. The king, who already bore the titles of vice-regent of the country and *sangû*, assumed the role of exclusive representative of the gods' interests[29] and became more and more conceptualized as the "warrior of the gods". In this function, political and economic expansionist policies within the Assyrian elite found their way under theological terms. Ritual texts and theological commentaries from the Neo-Assyrian period illustrate this characterization of the monarch. An undated ritual text from Nineveh, copied by the scribe Aššur-zāqip from an original text,[30] deals with a victory ritual in which the king takes part. The context is difficult to determine because of the fragmentary condition of the obverse side and the beginning of the tablet. The broken parts prevent us from knowing whether a ritual of investiture of the king as warrior of the gods was described at the beginning of the text. The preserved lines mention Enlil and Bēlat-dunāni, a manifestation of Ištar.[31] The text describes a series of ritual operations focusing on the use of war chariots in what seems to be a ritualisation of military or hunt performances of the ruling king. In the scene, the king is armed with a bow and arrow[32] – the essential components of the Assyrian king in his martial aspect[33] – and acts in coordination with ritual actors who perform

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[29] Faist, 2010: 18.

[30] SAA 20, 18.

[31] SAA 20, 18: 2, 4, 7, 35.

[32] SAA 20, 18: 22, 25, 30, 33.

[33] These royal weapons are attested in the Neo-Assyrian art. For representations of King Assurnaṣirpal II armed with bow and arrow in both war and ritual scenes in reliefs from the Northwest Palace in Kalḫu see, e.g., Matthiae, 1996: fig. 2.7 (Throne room B, reliefs 20–19); fig. 2.20 (Throne room B, relief 18b); fig. 3.1 (Throne room B, relief 5b); fig. 3.3 (Room H, relief 4).

songs, laments and a war dance,[34] while other performers play specific belligerent roles in the dynamics of the ritual battle or hunt.[35] The ritual ends with the defeat of the enemy by the king, who after removing his royal jewellery and hanging a lyre on his shoulder offers sheep offerings to the gods and enters in triumph.[36] Subsequently, in a special sacred area, called *qirsu*, the king arranges a meal for the deities.[37] The crucial moment of the ritual concern the shooting of arrows towards the character playing the role of the enemy. Different military operations enhance the martial role of the king, such as the dramatic crescendo that precedes the heroic entry of the king in the ritual scene, with songs referring to the hero's anger, exchange of laments and frenzied dances,[38] the circumambulation of the defeated enemy by the various actors involved in the ritual battle[39] and the act of raising the shields.[40] It is worth noting that the enemy is still alive when the shields are raised. This action, that probably involved all the participants, is the prelude to the kings' victorious act. After that the king approaches the enemy and ritually kills him.[41] The king's bow and arrow are touched and used by different actors: first the king strings it

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[34] The ritual actors are the *sarrānu*s, the *kurgarrû*s and the *assinnu*s. See SAA 20, 18: 10–21. The *sarrānu*s were a group of deities that were impersonated by some actors in the ritual scene. Note that this term is erroneously written with the determinative GIŠ instead of the determinative of divine beings in the record of cultic reforms SAA 20, 52 r. i 38'. See also *ibidem* r. i 36'.

[35] These are the "knight of the gods" (^{LÚ}A—SIG$_5$ *ša* DINGIR.MEŠ), the "left-house man of Mašmaš (= Nergal)" (^{LÚ}*šá*—É—KAB *šá* ^{d}MAŠ.MAŠ), the "left-house man of Adad" (^{LÚ}*šá*—É—KAB *šá* ^{d}IM), the overseer of the palace (^{LÚ}*šá*—IGI—É.GAL) and the deputy (^{LÚ2}-*u*). See SAA 20, 18:28, 31, 32, 33–35. In the performance of the victory ritual the king was assisted by a singer and another ritual actor called "ear-man" (^{LÚ}*šá*—PI.2). Another actor probably played the role of the enemy (^{LÚ}KÚR). See SAA 20, 18:14, 44. Presumably, Nergal and Adad were represented on these war chariots by their standards. Military standards were usually decorated by divine representations, such as the one atop a military standard in a relief of the reign of Sargon II showing the Storm-God on his bull in the act of shooting an arrow. See Botta / Flandin, 1849–50: II, fig. 158.

[36] SAA 20, 18: 48–54.

[37] SAA 20, 18: 55.

[38] SAA 20, 18: 14–15. The song intoned by the singer is "The hero got angry, enraged was the beautiful prince" (l. 14), while that of the *kurgarrû*s is "Battle is my game" (l. 19).

[39] SAA 20, 18: 42–43.

[40] SAA 20, 18: 47.

[41] SAA 20, 18: 48.

before the Sun-god and puts it on the ground.[42] Then unspecified actors lift and string it.[43] The arrow is also handled by different participants. It is taken by unspecified performers from the Nergal's chariot and wrapped with wool.[44] It is the "knight of the gods" (*mār damqi ša ilāni*) who is in charge of placing the arrow in the king's hand.[45] The king spins it around thrice and kisses it, before giving it to the knight of the gods.[46] Then the arrow is consigned to the "left-house-man of Nergal" (*ša-bēt-šumēli ša Mašmaš*), who nocks it on the bow.[47] Arrows are also used by the other participants in the ritual, but it seems that their attack is not successful.[48] It is at this point of the ritual that the arrow previously kissed by the king is used. According to the words pronounced by the "left-house-man of Adad" (*ša-bēt-šumēli ša Adad*), this is the "arrow of the god Aššur".[49] Finally, the divine arrow is shot and picked up thrice by the actors.[50] The text does not explain whether the king kills the enemy with this weapon, although the mention of the *šiltaḫu* in the preceding lines of the text make this interpretation plausible. The descriptive focus on the god's arrow and its use in the crucial phase of the ritual combat is aimed at stressing that the king's victory is possible thanks to the divine support – epitomized by the divine weapon.[51] At the same time, the ritual enables the king to present himself as the warrior who realizes the divine mandate of submitting the hostile forces and enlarging the Land of Aššur. This warlike representation of the role of Aššur's supreme priest must have been an integral part of the process of constructing his role as "warrior of the gods" in the Assyrian

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42 SAA 20, 18: 22–23.

43 SAA 20, 18: 24–25.

44 SAA 20, 18: 25–27.

45 SAA 20, 18: 28.

46 SAA 20, 18: 30–31.

47 SAA 20, 18: 32–33.

48 SAA 20, 18: 34–37.

49 SAA 20, 18: 40–41 ^{LÚ}*šá*—É—KAB *šá* ^{d}MAŠ.MAŠ *šá* ^{d}*aš-šur a-lik*, "The 'left-house-man' of Mašmaš says: '(Arrow) of Aššur, go!'."

50 SAA 20, 18: 41–43.

51 The legitimising function of the display of the "divine weapons" in these royal rituals may also be inferred from SAA 20, 50, a list of duties for the priestly personnel of the Aššur Temple in Assur. The text assigns to the steward of the Aššur Temple the responsibility of guarding and giving out arrows (SAA 20, 50 ii 11–13). The arrows in question were probably the arrows of the god Aššur, which the *laḫḫennu* had to put at the king's disposal on the occasion of victory rituals and analogous ceremonies.

state cult. This process also operated through the identification of the king's role as a re-enactment of roles played by martial gods, *in primis* the god Ninurta, the "avenger of his father" Enlil, as can be observed from a Neo-Assyrian theological commentary equating the crowned Assyrian king on the war chariot with Ninurta[52] and providing an interpretation of the above-mentioned victory ritual via mythical symbolism. This analogy is, however, only a single aspect in the more complex process of defining the martial role of the king as a god-inspired function in Assyrian state theology and political discourse. Generally, the martial connotation of the Assyrian king seems to be modelled on that of deities who show strong war-like personalities, such as Ninurta, Adad, Marduk and Ištar. According to this process of identification, the deeds of kings in war are modelled on the victorious mythical exploits of martial gods against chaotic monsters[53] commemorated in literary works.[54] This cultural process also affected the idea of war: the creative function that characterizes the gods' battles in the mythical sphere was ideally transferred to the king's military activism for the expansion of Assyria's borders and transformation of the chaotic peripheral world into a civilized one. Cultic commentaries offer another perspective for the legitimation of the Assyrian king: through the multiple semantic levels attributed to cultic paraphernalia, offerings, and ritual acts performed by the king and other ritual actors in royal rituals the warlike paradigm becomes a system of thought aimed at creating a model of kingship[55] and justify the necessity of the ritual engagement of the king

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[52] SAA 3, 39: 25–26: [25]LUGAL *šá ina* ŠÀ [giš]GIGIR GUB-*zu* [26]LUGAL *qar-ra-du* EN ʿ[d]ʾMAŠ *šu-u*, "The king who stands in the chariot is the warrior king, the lord Ninurta"; *ibidem* r.20–22: [20]LUGAL *ša* TA *qí-rib* É.KUR AGA KUG.GI *ina* SAG.DU-*šú* IL-*šu-ma* [21]*ina* [giš]GU.ZA TUŠ-*bu u i-na-áš-šú-šú-ma ana* É.GAL DU-*ku* [22d]MAŠ *šá* ŠU.2 AD-*šú ú-tir-ru*, "The king who wears on his head a golden tiara from the inside of the temple and sits on a sedan chair, while they carry him and go to the palace, is Ninurta, who avenged his father". The significance of the god Ninurta for the Assyrian royal ideology has been extensively treated in Annus, 2002. On Ninurta as a warlike model for the Assyrian king see more recently Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 228–270.

[53] Maul, 1999: 211.

[54] E.g., *Enūma eliš*, *Angim*, *Lugal-e* and the *Poem of Anzû.*

[55] For an introduction to the Neo-Assyrian cultic commentaries see Livingstone, 1989: xxix–xxx. As noted by Pongratz-Leisten (Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 390), cultic commentaries served to interpret the meaning of the state rituals and represent an important source to know how certain Assyrian scholarly circles understood these practices.

for the correct functioning of the state and the universe.[56] The result of this modelling is the heroic conception of the king's achievements as being extraordinary and superhuman. Various divine figures were chosen in the Assyrian religious discourse to legitimise the king's claims to universal dominion on theological grounds, such as Nabû and Marduk, especially during the reigns of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal, two kings who were especially involved in Babylonian affairs. There is no doubt that the introduction of Babylonian cults in Assyria in Middle Assyrian times as well as the development of the Ninurta-theology during this period and in the ninth century were part of a larger cultural strategy to legitimise Assyrian royal power and at the same time break the cultural and religious centrality that Babylon had for a long time enjoyed in the Mesopotamian world. Also the anti-Babylonian policy of Sennacherib, that resulted in assigning an unprecedented theological centrality to the god Aššur and his temple Ešarra in order to break the traditional role of Marduk and his Babylonian sanctuary in Mesopotamia, was aimed at legitimising the king's absolutist power. With Sennacherib's Assyrianizing appropriation of Marduk combat myth,[57] an unprecedented universalistic character was assigned to the Assyrian notion of divine mandate of the king and the Land of Aššur. In this way the warlike paradigm enabled the king to strengthen his affiliation with the patron god of the country and to show the complete adhesion of his expansionist project with a superior cosmic order to which all the gods of the former theological traditions were subjected. To visually express the king's role as the human counterpart of victorious gods who defeated mythical monsters and chaotic forces, various triumphal *akītu*-processions were celebrated in Assyria in addition to the New Year festival in Aššur.[58] The *akītu*-celebration that was imported in Assyria was adapted to the Assyrian state theology with the purpose to re-affirm annually the central role of Aššur as divine patron of the country and that of the king as the god-supported warrior who realizes the god's plan in the world. The political use of the *akītu* is also evident from its arrangement to legitimise irregular succession on the throne of Assyria, as

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[56] Livingstone, 1989: xxix.

[57] The re-writing of *Enūma eliš* with the replacement of the name of Marduk with that of Aššur, for which see Lambert, 1997: 77–79, as well as the vast temple building programme of Sennacherib in Assur, discussed in Galter, 1984: 433–441, were also an integral part of this Aššur-centered cultural project promoted in Assyria.

[58] Pongratz-Leisten, 1994: 79–83; Annus, 2002: 90–94.

in the case of the loyalty oath organized by Esarhaddon in favour of Assurbanipal, his younger son.[59]

These public events, in which the king made his triumphal entry into the city with his troops and during which war booty and prisoners were displayed, enabled the Assyrian monarch to present himself publicly as the personification of a victorious god and to use the defeated rulers and prisoners of war as human representation of the mythical monsters vanquished by the martial deity. Presumably, the recitation of the king's heroic deeds was also performed in such official occasions to present him as the irreplaceable leader for the imperial project. The heroic paradigm in the context of royal rituals enabled the monarch to re-enact the cosmic battles performed by martial gods in the mythical sphere. At the same time, this ritual and public setting re-affirmed the king's power position in relationship with the chief god of Assyria and the social elites of the old city of Aššur. Through these cultic practices which required the participation of the king, the scholarly and priestly circles of Aššur emerged as an important component in the production of the warlike presentation of the king and his mission, and of the periodical cementing of kingship in the Assyrian society. In fact, the organizational and performative phases related to these royal rituals, as well as the phase of theological exegesis expressed through the commentaries, represented important occasions to express support to the king from the most relevant components of the Assyrian elite and, in such a way, to sanction the king's authority and policy through the solemn language of liturgy and of the theological interpretations. Specific elements of the combat myth that informed the Neo-Assyrian state ideology also played a significant role in royal rituals, such as the motif of divine parricide, presumably included in cultic rituals and theological commentaries with the aim to justify – and provide a model for – cases of irregular generational change in royal leadership in Sargonid Assyria.[60]

In this process of constructing the martial aspects of the royal persona (and thus reinforcing his political legitimacy), a significant role was played from the late second millennium BC onwards by the absorption of literary and religious elements of Babylonian culture. Both Tukultī-Ninurta I (1243–1207 BC) and Tiglath-pileser I (1114–1076 BC) brought

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[59] Parpola, 2017: lviii.

[60] On this motif in Neo-Assyrian state rituals see the discussion in Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 423, 426.

various Babylonian literary works to Assyria as booty, and the latter established the first royal library. The Babylonian texts were copied in Aššur and strongly inspired the composition of new works (in a "genre" of epic content previously unknown in Babylonia[61]) as well as a more marked heroic re-definition of the local royal imagery. The *Poem celebrating Tukultī-Ninurta I's war against Kaštiliaš IV*[62] and the Poem of Tiglath-pileser I's Campaign against the lands of Muṣru, Qumanu and Ḫabḫu,[63] two masterpieces of Middle Assyrian political literature, form an integral part of the process of legitimisation of the Assyrian king's role and his justification for going to war in the framework of the expansionist project, helping to establish the role of the Assyrian king as the "warrior of the gods". The rhetoric that accompanies the warlike paradigm of the Assyrian king in the royal inscriptions originates from the cultural debate on kingship that developed in the Middle Assyrian period – as evidenced above all by the poems of Tukultī-Ninurta I and Tiglath-pileser I – and continued in the subsequent centuries. This long-term cultural and political process – which also included the annalistic development of the "genre" of royal inscriptions, the composition of epics and other political texts dealing with specific military events[64] – reached its peak in the first millennium BC, coinciding with the phases of maximum expansion and consolidation of the Assyrian state. These occurred in the period from the ninth to the eighth century, and again in the seventh century. It is clear that large-scale military interventions and their victorious results inspired grandiose public

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[61] The predominant focus on the individualism of the king as a superhuman and divine-inspired warrior as well as the marked tone of self-justification for the righteousness of the king's actions are absent in the Babylonian royal epics. See Foster, 2005: 381–382, 385 for the epic texts referring to Nebuchadnezzar I, king of Babylon (1125–1104 BC).

[62] Foster, 2005: 299–317. As observed by Pongratz-Leisten, who analysed this poem in her recent work (Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 297–298), the treaty motif is the major theme of Tukultī-Ninurta I's epic text. In Assyria, both royal epic and royal inscriptions share a common heroic presentation of the king's deeds, although the latter text category tends to be "single-focused, centering on the action of the Assyrian king without accounting for the thought processes of enemies and assigning them a passive and often even anonymous role" (Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 298).

[63] Foster, 2005: 324–326.

[64] See the so-called "royal propaganda" compositions SAA 3, 29–33, the most important of which are a text about the defeat of the Elamite king Teumman and the annexation of Elam, a text concerning the underworld vision of an Assyrian prince and a composition about the sin of Sargon.

celebrations in Assyria, helping to further consolidate the king's power. Perhaps the composition of literary texts that were promoted by the crown and that praised the king's wars after the conclusion of the campaign was linked to court events at which the texts were recited. To judge from the various epic texts dealing with the *materia epica elamica* that survive from the period, the victorious exploits of Assurbanipal's interventions in Elam must have represented an important chance to celebrate the king in his role as "warrior of the gods" and consequently to re-affirm the legitimacy of his position. Not all the victorious military exploits of a king in hostile lands during his reign were committed to epic writing, but only those deeds that could more easily help to consolidate the imagery of the heroic power of the ruling king, as it may be surmised in the case of the choice of the conflict with Kassite Babylonia in epic texts of Adad-nērārī I and Tukultī-Ninurta I or the eighth campaign against Urarṭu in the case of Sargon II's "Letter to the God Aššur". It is interesting to note that the choice of the geographical scenario of the hostile land, characterized by two main obstacles opposing the Assyrian king's intervention, natural (the difficult terrain) and human (the local people), is of paramount importance in the construction of the Assyrian king's heroic profile. Consequently, not all the foreign lands reached by the Assyrian expansionism and not all the recalcitrant foreign rulers vanquished by the Assyrian king could offer such elements to the authors of epic literature and to court audience.

These cultural achievements represented important steps in the process of legitimising the king's claims to universal dominion and the consolidation of his authority within the Assyrian ruling class. The value of this growing heroic tradition that we see in royal and literary texts celebrating the king's deeds of the second and first millennium BC also stands witness to the continuous consultation of royal annals of former kings and old literary texts made by court scribes – presumably not only as a scholarly *recherche* of literary devices, archaisms, and narrative structures of past inscriptions helpful to shape the warlike imagery of the living king, but also as a political necessity to know how ancient kings performed their heroic mission. The necessity to adhere to the heroic paradigm was an integral part of the political agenda of the Assyrian kings. The ideal competition with the predecessors enabled the living king to model his conduct to that of victorious kings of the past and at the same time to show that his deeds exceeded in heroism those of the predecessors. As regards warlike epithets, for instance, it is not by chance that in Sargonid royal inscriptions we frequently find the re-use or variation of the phraseology of those Middle Assyrian and early Neo-

Assyrian kings who strongly promoted warlike imagery to legitimise their position and claims.[65] This is also evident in the re-use and elaboration of Middle and early Neo-Assyrian themes in narrative sections of the late Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions.[66] This was primarily due to the political model of kingship chosen by the late Neo-Assyrian kings and modelled on the policy of those Middle and early Neo-Assyrian kings who were the most active in the military expansionist project and in integrating new territories into the Land of Aššur.[67]

After the end of the Middle Assyrian kingdom, the expansionist project was also part of the policy of the last Assyrian kings, who were all able rulers. These kings, however, had difficulties during their reigns, since they were not first in line for succession to the throne. Tiglath-pileser III

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[65] There seems to be a special interest by the authors of Sargonid royal inscriptions for the phraseology of heroic epithets of the inscriptions of Shalmaneser I, Tukultī-Ninurta I, Adad-nērārī II and Assurnaṣirpal II. On this aspect see my analysis of Sargonid heroic epithets in Gaspa, 2007: 236–258. See also Karlsson, 2016: 317–318 on re-use and elaboration of Middle Assyrian and early Neo-Assyrian heroic-military epithets by Sargon II and the Sargonids, which confirms a substantial continuity in state ideology from the Middle to the Neo-Assyrian period. Analogous considerations may be made about the adoption of certain ancient royal names by the early Neo-Assyrian kings, presumably as a reflection of the model role played by the most "heroic" Middle Assyrian kings in the eyes of later kings of Assyria. On the important role played by the early Neo-Assyrian state ideology in the development of the Neo-Assyrian political discourse see now Karlsson, 2016: esp. 247–267 and 311–326 on the ideological developments that occurred within the reigns of Assurnaṣirpal II and Shalmaneser III.

[66] Karlsson's survey on themes used in narrative sections of the late royal inscriptions shows that continuity in state ideology from the Middle to the early Neo-Assyrian period, as well as from the early Neo-Assyrian to the late Neo-Assyrian period, is indisputable. See Karlsson, 2016: 318–325.

[67] The continuity from the Middle Assyrian to the Neo-Assyrian period can also be seen from the viewpoint of the institutional development of the state. Various institutional changes of great relevance occurred in the Middle Assyrian state, above all the increase of the king's power at the expense of other political bodies, the establishment of the province administrative system and the growing role played by the highest officials. These innovative elements were crucial in shaping the organization of the second-millennium state and its political ideology and were at work also in the first-millennium Empire. See Faist, 2010: 17–22. In the case of Sargon II there was also the tendency to model the king's claims of universal dominion to those of Sargon of Akkad, whose tradition was revived in the Neo-Assyrian period. On this aspect see Van de Mieroop, 1999: 327–339 and Galter, 2014: 339–340.

was the son of Aššur-nērārī V (754–745 BC) and grandson of Adad-nērārī III (810–783 BC), although no details are known about his family connection. He seized the throne during a weakness phase of the kingdom, when state unity was threatened by the increasing independence of local governors. The power of local officials was thwarted by assigning them smaller provinces and by considerably extending the number of the provinces from twelve to twenty-five. Sargon II was the son of Tiglath-pileser and brother of Shalmaneser V, who preceded him on the throne as the legitimate heir. Sennacherib was Sargon II's son, but the inauspicious event of Sargon's death on the battlefield in Tabal, the negative impact of the destruction of Babylon, succession problems and conspiracy characterized his reign: he preferred the youngest among his sons as heir and he was consequently assassinated.[68] Esarhaddon was well down in the line of succession and he had to defeat his older brothers in the succession war that followed the murder of his father to take the throne of Assyria. Internal instability also marked his reign: in 670 BC his own magnates were assassinated to prevent an uprising against his power. Assurbanipal was younger than his brothers and to avoid another civil war, Esarhaddon imposed on the Assyrians and vassal rulers a loyalty pact in 672 BC in favour of his two designated heirs, Assurbanipal in Assyria and Šamaš-šumu-ukīn in Babylonia,[69] a solution that had already been adopted by Sennacherib for his succession.[70] Another loyalty pact to Assurbanipal was imposed on the Assyrian family and the entire Assyrian nation by Queen Zakūtu after Esarhaddon's death in 669 BC.[71] Succession problems continued after Assurbanipal's death: the situation cannot be reconstructed in detail, but it seems that the succession of Aššur-etel-ilāni (630?–627? BC), the designed heir, was contested and that other claimants to the throne fought out a struggle for power. What it is certain is that Sîn-šar-iškun, Aššur-etel-ilāni's brother, ruled Assyria until 612 BC – when

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[68] See SAA 2, 3, the succession treaty concerning the appointment of Esarhaddon as Sennacherib's successor.

[69] SAA 2, 6. There are other treaties imposed on the king's subjects by Esarhaddon: SAA 2, 4 was imposed before his accession in 681 BC, while SAA 2, 7 was imposed after a *coup d'état* attempted in 670 BC. Both are in fragmentary conditions, however.

[70] SAA 2, 3 is a treaty of Sennacherib, possibly linked to the promotion of Esarhaddon.

[71] SAA 2, 8 is the treaty that Zakūtu, the queen of Sennacherib and mother of Esarhaddon, concluded with "the whole Assyrian nation concerning her favourite grandson Assurbanipal" (l. 11).

the succession war for the Assyrian throne reached its apex – and that Aššur-uballiṭ II was able to maintain the power only for few years (611–609 BC) at Ḫarrān, where the Assyrian court took refuge after the fall of Nineveh. The period of *pax assyriaca* dramatically ended with a situation of instability at the very centre of the imperial territory and late kings had to face more with internal dangers such as conspiracies and irregular succession than international political affairs.[72]

In addition to dynastic problems, Neo-Assyrian kings had to manage institutional reforms during their reigns. The first difficult situation came about because of internal weakness in the first half of the eighth century, when provincial governors acted with a certain degree of independence. With the internal "reforms" of Tiglath-pileser III, the internal administrative structure of the Assyrian state was restructured and the powers of local officials were greatly reduced. The reorganization of the army was characterized by a central role for cavalry and chariotry as professional soldiers: these were members of old and affluent Assyrian families, the ones who supported the ruling king and the expansionists in the capital. With Sargon II we see the attempt to repay those sectors of Assyrian elite that suffered from Shalmaneser V's policy: he re-established the privileges and exemptions for the cities of Aššur and Harran, which had previously been removed. Esarhaddon's solution for the two reigns – Assyria to Assurbanipal and Babylonia to Šamaš-šumu-ukīn – did not solve the succession problems and civil war between the two brothers marked the zenith of this internal crisis affecting the Assyrian ruling elite. During his reign he promoted a massive programme of building activities in Babylonia in order to present himself as a pro-Babylonian king, respectful of Babylonian gods, in contrast with the attitude of his father, who destroyed Babylon and its temples and deported its cultic statues to Assyria. The negative impact that the father's impious destruction had in the Assyrian religious debate of the time explains, at least in part, the obsessive behaviour of Esarhaddon as regards the correct interpretation of the gods' will and the frequent recourse to divination. None of the above-listed difficulties, however, led the communication experts and the advisors assisting the king to abandon the warlike imagery of the monarch and the representation of his power as a divine-inspired mission in official texts and monuments, although during Esarhaddon's reign and those of

[72] Liverani, 2017a: 543.

his successors a profound crisis of legitimacy affected the Assyrian king's power and new themes were introduced or emphasized in the political discourse that informed the state ideology.

Apart from the representation of the king as a warrior empowered by the "Great Gods" of Assyria that we find in royal inscriptions, there are other types of texts that witness to the worries of the ruling elite regarding the legitimacy of the king and his claims. These are the prophecies and the letters of the gods, two types of texts which stress the direct and legitimate connection between the Assyrian king and the divine world. These types of texts represent different means adopted by Assyrian scribes to construct and consolidate the king's legitimacy in the political discourse. They are to be read as the reflection of a new political situation in Assyria and bear witness of the growing internal instability in the country, when the empire reached the apex of its territorial expansion. In oracular messages to Esarhaddon, Ištar of Arbela calls the king the "rightful heir".[73] The emphasis on the institutional connection of the king with the goddess, seen as the nurse and protector of the king,[74] is related to the situation of irregular dynastic succession that characterizes the last reigns, when crown princes were not selected according to the norm of primogeniture and the swearing of loyal oaths was necessary to confirm and strengthen the king's decision in favour of the designated heir.[75] For both Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal, the goddess expresses her support in vanquishing their enemies. In these texts, the legitimacy of the king's power derives from his being the son of the goddess and the one who is constantly assisted by her. In oracular texts, where it is the goddess Ištar who speaks through the mouth of prophets, the goddess presents herself as the one

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[73] SAA 9, 1.6 iv 5–6.

[74] An element that is reminded by Nabû in person in his dialogue with Assurbanipal. See SAA 3, 13 r.6–8: r.6*še-eḫ-ru at-ta* lAN.ŠÁR—DÙ—A *ša ú-maš-šir-u-ka ina* UGU d*šar-rat*—NINA.KI 7*la-ku-u at-ta* lAN.ŠÁR—DÙ—A *ša áš-ba-ka ina bur-ki* d*šar-rat*—NINA.KI 8*er-bi zi-ze-e-šá ina pi-ka šak-na* 2 *te-en-ni-iq* 2 *ta-ḫal-líp ana pa-ni-ka*, "You were a child, Assurbanipal, when I left you with the Queen of Nineveh; you were a baby, Assurbanipal, when you sat in the lap of the Queen of Nineveh! Her four teats are placed in your mouth; two you suck, and two you milk to your face."

[75] However, according to Parpola the stress on legitimacy in prophecies in favour of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal did not indicate the need for a divine approval, but reflected "the exceptional care by which both kings were raised to the status of crown princes." (Parpola, 1997: xxxix).

who personally defeats the king's enemies: she casts the king's enemies before the king's feet, she flays them and gives them to the king;[76] armed with an angry dagger, she is the one who finishes off the king's enemies;[77] she sheds the blood of the adversaries of her *protégé*, puts them in neck stocks and brings vassals with tribute before the king's feet.[78] The redundant element of the divine protection of the sovereign in these late texts is an indication that internal support to the reigning king in Assyria was far from granted. The cases of deviation from the law of primogeniture that occurred in the Sargonid period must have had an impact on the internal political discourse, thus affecting the credibility of individual kings and the heroic construct that informed the king's imagery. Accordingly, the theme of divine sanction was considered necessary to legitimise the king's position and his deeds.[79] The study of prophecies also sheds light on the political purpose that determined their assembly in collections. In tracing Esarhaddon's ascension to the throne, oracle collections in favour of this king seem to sanction the model of irregular succession determined by him and extend its validity also in the future.[80] The problems of ensuring and maintaining loyalty to the king concerned not only the royal family, court personnel and major state officers with military and administrative duties; it also concerned various components of the imperial society – both in the Assyrian heartland and outside it – whose consensus had to be acquired, consolidated or renewed to run the state machinery. This becomes more evident when considering the periodical royal concessions of land, tax-exemptions and other privileges to members of the ruling class or to specific social groups (for instance, to the social elites of Aššur and of the major Babylonian cities).[81] Consensus to the Assyrian expansionist project was also obtained from foreign polities that wanted to profit from the new political order and the resulting political and economic advantages,

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[76] SAA 9, 1.1: 13'–14'.

[77] SAA 9, 1.6 iv 7'–10'.

[78] SAA 9, 2.4: 22'–25'.

[79] Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 323.

[80] See Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 357 on the interpretation that the oracles in favour of Esarhaddon created a "divinely approved precedent for deviation from the tradition of primogeniture."

[81] See, e.g., the letter sent to the king SAA 18, 158, dealing with the privileged status of the inhabitants of Babylon.

although the decision to collaborate to this project could have a traumatic impact on the internal cohesion of the local polity.[82]

It can be inferred that the internal situation in Assyria during the late phase of Neo-Assyrian history was problematic, and that the military operations of the king had to be presented as legitimated by a superior authority in the eyes of his subjects. This is evident from a number of letters whose "authors" are the gods themselves. Of this correspondence between the king and his deities we only possess the letters apparently sent by the gods, although a number of royal annals are structured in the form of a letter in which the king reports his deeds directly to his god. The "ideal dialogue" created by king's report to the god and god's response shows that the traditional literary means of the Assyrian political discourse were considered inadequate in certain reigns of the Neo-Assyrian period. In the preserved divine letters sent to Assyrian kings, the sender is generally the supreme Assyrian god.[83] One epistle is sent from Ninurta to an unknown Assyrian king.[84] The letter sent from Aššur to Šamšī-Adad V (823–811 BC) is an interesting example of a divine letter of the period preceding the Sargonid age. In this text the description of the king's successful military achievements and the enumeration of booty related to his campaigns against Babylonia and Elam are completed by a standard formula by which the god states that all these victorious deeds happened at the command of his great divinity.[85] The most known example of royal report to the god is Sargon II's "Letter to the god Aššur", a text that describes in detail his eighth campaign conducted against Urarṭu and the rich booty brought to Assyria.[86] Kings like Sargon and Esarhaddon explicitly state to have sent a report about their victorious deeds to the god Aššur: the mention of this is followed by the quantification of dead soldiers in the Assyrian royal

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[82] The question of the consensus from foreign polities has been treated in Lanfranchi, 1997: 81–87 and Lanfranchi, 2011: 222–224.

[83] For the divine letter corpus collected by A. Livingstone see SAA 3, 41; 42; 43; 44; 45. The fragmentary text SAA 3, 46 is another divine letter.

[84] SAA 3, 47.

[85] SAA 3, 41: 12': 12'*ina pi-i* DINGIR-*ti-ia* GAL-*ti it-tuq-ta*, "(That) happened at the command of my great divinity." The same formula occurs in *ibidem* r.13. Also the fragmentary royal letters SAA 3, 42 and 43 are related to the Babylonian campaigns of this king. See Livingstone, 1989: xxx.

[86] See Foster, 2005: 791–813.

army.[87] It is interesting to observe that quantification of dead soldiers becomes a standard and invariable motif in such royal reports, as shown by its use in a letter of Aššur's quoting a report of Assurbanipal.[88] The public reading of these letters certainly represented important occasions to expose the Assyrian population to royal propaganda as regards the motivation of campaigns and the "divine heroism" of the monarch. In this connection, one wonders whether the gods' responses were publicly read together with the kings' letters or separately, during analogous public ceremonies. Esarhaddon's letter to the god Aššur reporting his campaign in the land of Šubria in 673 BC may have been composed and publicly read in ceremonies held on the occasion of nomination of Assurbanipal and Šamaš-šumu-ukīn as heir designates in Ayyāru 672 BC.[89] Two letters are Aššur's responses to Assurbanipal's reports on his wars. In one, concerning the king's report on the civil war engaged from 652 to 648 BC against Šamaš-šumu-ukīn, Assurbanipal's brother and king of Babylonia,[90] the god states that he personally overthrew Šamaš-šumu-ukīn because of his "evil deeds". It was the supreme Assyrian god who decreed Assurbanipal's fate; the king is described in the god's words as the "just shepherd of the subjects of Enlil" and as the one who, at the command of Aššur's great divinity, defeated the enemy. Aššur sent before Assurbanipal his fierce weapons to subjugate his enemies and, because of the "evil deeds" that the "sinner" Šamaš-šumu-ukīn committed against the Assyrian king, the god pulled out the foundation of his throne in Babylonia and commanded the destruction of his reign.[91] Assurbanipal is described in this letter as the one who incessantly addresses prayers and supplications to the god.[92] The purpose of this letter is to stress that Assurbanipal's fratricide – an action whose god-supported heroism could be considered controversial in the Assyrian royal family and court milieu – was perfectly congruent with the supreme god's plan. Indeed, the emphasis on the "evil deeds" of Šamaš-

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[87] See Foster, 2005: 812. See also RINAP 4, 33 iv 11'–13': 11' *li-šá-a-nu re-še-e-ti* ^{I}NENNI 12' *a-na* ^{d}*aš-šur* EN-*ía ul-te-bi-la* 13' 1-*en* ^{lú}EN ^{giš}GIGIR 2 ^{lú}*šá—pét-ḫal* 3 ^{lú}*kal-lap*.MEŠ *de-e-ku*, "I am sending the best report to the god Aššur, my lord, by so-and-so. One charioteer, two cavalrymen (and) three scouts are dead."

[88] SAA 3, 45 r.4'–5'.

[89] RINAP 4, p. 79.

[90] SAA 3, 44.

[91] SAA 3, 44: 4.

[92] SAA 3, 44: 28.

šumu-ukīn is the recurrent motif of this text[93] and it is instrumental to present Assurbanipal's brutal intervention in Babylonia as the direct consequence of the anger of all the gods. In addition, according to the god's words it is Šamaš-šumu-ukīn himself who ruined his own life, overlooking Aššur's curse.[94] For his part, the god Aššur stands at Assurbanipal's side in war, smashing the enemies' bows and making the Assyrian king's weapons stronger than those of his adversaries.[95] The military victory is presented as resulting from both the god's direct intervention and Assurbanipal's piety, showing the king as the one who does what the god commands.[96] Aššur made the king's name great and consequently the king's troops "can go victoriously wherever there is fighting with weapons".[97]

The second important letter "written" by the god Aššur concerns the Elamite wars. This was a response by the god to Assurbanipal's report on the Elamite campaigns. Here too, it is the god who speaks. The text is broken in many parts but it is clear that also in this letter the god mentions the good fate decreed for Assurbanipal. The god reminds Assurbanipal that "he has no equal where there is battle" and that enemy rulers kneel before him and praise the valour of his lordship.[98] Since the divine support for the king is total, his faith to the gods makes him victorious over his adversaries. Prophecies and letters from the deities show the intimacy, the special relationship between the king and the divine world. This is not a novelty in Mesopotamian history, since various kings stated to have been chosen by the god and even assisted by them since their generation. In the Neo-Assyrian period, however – especially in the Sargonid age – kings seem to have revived this ancient ideological and religious motif, establishing the innovative idea that the nature of the king's person was not only a creation of the gods and the product of his being raised by the deities, but also that his special proximity to the gods made him the perfect candidate to accomplish the heroic and warlike mission of enlarging the borders of the Land of the god Aššur – a mission too great for mortals. From this perspective, only someone who has been created by the gods

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93 SAA 3, 44: 3, 20.

94 SAA 3, 44: 13–15.

95 SAA 3, 44 r.5.

96 SAA 3, 44 r.22: r.22[*ina*] *a-mat* DINGIR-*ti-ia aq-bi-ka-ma at-ta te-e-pu-uš*, "I spoke to you [with] my divine word and you acted".

97 SAA 3, 44: 27.

98 SAA 3, 45: 4'–5'.

and received powers and qualities from the divine world since his creation could victoriously accomplish the mission of defeating evil and ruling the country. In such a view, the heroic and warlike embodiment of the gods' desire could successfully unite the rival interests of the long-established aristocrats of Assyria with those of new emerging powerful state officials who had benefited from the career prospects in military and state administration from the second half of the eighth century BC onwards.[99] However, the enlargement of the social basis composing the Assyrian ruling class – the direct consequence of the unprecedented territorial expansion of the state – required new responses in terms of internal political discourse aimed at creating cohesion and support to the king's policy. Royal reports and gods' letters suggest that such an heroic paradigm should be balanced by stressing the divine support to the individual king and that the king's deeds were perfectly congruent with the gods' desires.

Both the prophetic texts and the correspondence between the king and his god display an "ideal dialogue" on the victorious accomplishments of the Assyrian king. This direct dialogue between king and god is peculiar to the special proximity that the king is shown to have with the divine sphere: in a poetic composition of the late Neo-Assyrian period a dialogue between Assurbanipal and Nabû is described. Interestingly, the phraseology of Nabû's speech is reminiscent of the words of the goddess of Arbela in oracular texts.[100] More importantly, the prophecies and the gods' letters offer an explanation of why the Assyrian king is a righteous and legitimate king in a way that differs from the royal inscriptions, in which the discourse on the god-supported actions of the king is made by the king in person. In the prophecies and divine letters it is the god who speaks, and the god's (historiographic) point of view on the king's

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[99] On the possible rivalry between sectors of the Assyrian ruling class, see Kuhrt, 1995: 506.

[100] SAA 3, 13: 24–26: [24]*la ta-pal-làḫ* [1]AN.ŠÁR—DÙ—A ZI.MEŠ GÍD.DA.MEŠ *ad-da-nak-ka* [25]TU$_{15}$.MEŠ DÙG.GA.MEŠ TA*! ZI.MEŠ-*ka a-paq-qid* [26]*pi-ia am-mì-u ša* DÙG.GA *ik-ta-nar-rab-ka ina* UKKIN DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ, "Fear not, Assurbanipal! I will give you long life, I will entrust pleasant breezes with your soul; my pleasant mouth shall ever bless you in the assembly of the Great Gods"; *ibidem* r.9–11: [9]*ḫa-da-nu-te-ka* [1]AN.ŠÁR—DÙ—A *ki-i si-pi ina pa-an me-e i-šu*[!]*-'u* [10]*ki-i bur-bi-il-la-a-te ša pa-an šat-ti un-ta-at-ar*[!!]*-ru-qu ina* IGI GÌR.2-*ka* [11]*ta-az-za-az* [1]AN.ŠÁR—DÙ—A *ina tar-ṣi* DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ *tu-na-'a-ad ana* [d]PA, "Your ill-wishers, Assurbanipal, will fly away like pollen on the surface of the water. They will be squashed before your feet like *burbillātu*-insects in spring! You, Assurbanipal, you will stand before the Great Gods and praise Nabû!".

military achievements is central; the god reminds the king that his actions were performed at the command of the god and that the reason for the divine intervention was the evil deeds of the enemies. This means that every action of the king is legitimate because it was commanded by the god. Here, the message touches well-known elements of the traditional ideological discourse in support of the king's position and claims, but the fundamental difference is that the king's actions are presented as the god's desires, solemnly stated by the voice of the gods themselves, from which every human authority is ultimately derived. Moreover, by attributing the king's deeds to the gods and in expressing the divine sanction to the ruler's deeds, the authors of these texts intended to show that the king's achievements were perfectly in line with the gods' will. Texts from the time of the last Neo-Assyrian kings imply that the protagonists of martial actions leading to victory are the gods, not the kings. This communication strategy of constructing legitimacy through the gods' voice indirectly proves the situation of weakness affecting the king's role within the Assyrian ruling class in the late Neo-Assyrian period[101] and shows that in this political phase of the empire the evaluation of the individual king's responsibility for his actions was crucial to determine his credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of the Assyrian elite or specific components of it. As it has been observed, the necessity of a divine sanction of the king's policy as we see in gods' responses to king's reports was strictly related to exceptional situations, when a special form of divine legitimation was presumably considered as the more appropriate means to contrast internal criticism and opposition.[102]

2. Constructing the King's Legitimacy through Displaying Objects of War

The public parade of prisoners and the display of war booty was presumably used in Assyrian cities to show the worldly accomplishments of the king's divine mission to rule. We may surmise that the yearly campaign and its

[101] On the voices of gods as a means to rethink Assyrian kingship and the king's deeds see Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 341–360.

[102] This form of divine legitimation was not regularly sought for every king's military campaign, but was expressed in texts – king's reports and gods' responses – only in exceptional situations, such as cases of violation of international agreements, abduction of enemy gods, destruction of foreign temples, and involvement of the king in fratricide, as discussed in Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 324, 331.

results were emphasized through public ceremonies in order to consolidate Assyria's support to the king and his militaristic policy. The populations of Assyrian cities were probably informed through these public events, which helped to construct the legitimacy of war. The display of a variety of exotic material culture items represented another means to strengthen the legitimacy of the king's position. References to exotic materials and precious manufactured objects taken as booty or in tribute from conquered lands was also part of that message of universal dominion. The role of material culture in conveying ideas, values and identities should not be undervalued. The major building projects promoted by Assyrian kings in their capitals were strictly related to the flow of goods from military campaigns. These massive building achievements consolidated the internal consensus and legitimacy of the ruling king by those who benefitted from the new resources and work opportunities available in the country: slaves and animals for agricultural works and building activities in the capitals (Kalḫu, Dūr-Šarrukēn and Nineveh), and raw and manufactured goods from conquered countries for palace and temple artisans. There were also ample opportunities for personal profit for members of the Assyrian state administration who had been directly involved in the wartime activities, in the administrative management of war tribute or booty and in building projects in the Empire's cities. To maintain this level of wealth and organization of the Empire's machinery, constant military activity by the state was necessary. This could explain the marked militaristic tone of the Assyrian royal ideology throughout the entire history of this North Mesopotamian polity and the martial connotations of the king, who was supposed to lead his army every year to new victories and greater material resources.

Collecting and displaying exotic artefacts is a typical feature of imperialism. In Assyria, this aspect was an integral part of the imperial project and the heroic paradigm conveyed by official texts and monuments.[103] Collecting luxury objects for the embellishment of their palaces and exotic animals for their royal parks in the capitals have always been an important part of the imagery of universal dominion displayed by Assyrian kings in their texts and monuments. Usually, these items were exhibited as part of the booty acquired from successful military campaigns. Parading these items in public, perhaps during or before the public reading of "letters

[103] For Assyrian royal collecting and its connection with imperialism see Reade, 2004: 255–268; Thomason, 2005: 119–205; Liverani, 2017b: 61–74.

to the gods",[104] was an integral part of the king's message of universal dominion, and consequently also played a significant role in legitimising the king's claims. We may also infer that the parade of luxury furniture and objects displayed as booty or tribute on wall-panels decorating the interior of royal palaces also had a role in maintaining the interest of the Assyrian elite in the expansionist project and encouraging them to mobilize or consolidate their support for this aim. Carved and inlaid furniture, precious stone vessels, jewels and finely-executed garments were some of the luxury goods that attracted the Assyrian kings' interest. Of course, the same items also circulated among high-ranking Assyrians, such as governors and other upper class members of the state apparatus. Emulation of king's collecting and exoticism among high-ranking people of the imperial society in central as well as peripheral cities must have been one of the more visible effects of their adhesion to the expansionist project.

The connotation of these luxury goods as booty and tribute in royal annals probably masks their acquisition through trade, rather than war.[105] Presenting these objects as war booty served as another way of enhancing the heroism of the king and displaying the positive results of the god-inspired mission to extend the Land of Aššur. We may observe that the heroic priority of the Assyrian king is transferred from the realm of military action to that of luxury collecting: the king wants to demonstrate that the objects of war – generally plundered from the royal palace of the enemy ruler – are more appealing, exotic and unique than those acquired by his predecessors in past campaigns.[106] Ivory furniture fittings, small boxes and other finely-carved items found in palace buildings in Nimrud (such as the Northwest Palace, the Southeast Palace and Fort Shalmaneser), bear witness to the kings' interest in North Syrian and Phoenician ivory luxuries.[107] The display of these objects in monumental art (palace reliefs) was to some extent a political display, intended to show – via royal luxuries formerly belonging to the enemy ruler – that the power of each Assyrian king surpassed that of all his predecessors and of any other ruler. By possessing these foreign royal items as part of an endless "acquisitive" ideal, the Assyrian king demonstrated that only he was rightly allowed to possess paraphernalia suitable for kingship, rather than disloyal subjects or enemy

[104] Liverani, 2017b: 76.
[105] Thomason, 2005: 123.
[106] Thomason, 2005: 125.
[107] Thomason, 2005: 120–140.

rulers. From this perspective, collecting luxuries became another means of legitimising the king's claims to universal dominion, and the objects served to construct and reinforce the aesthetics of the Neo-Assyrian king's power. Sargon's palace at Khorsabad shows in its wall-reliefs Assyrian courtiers bringing pieces of finely-decorated furniture;[108] the objects represented include items presumably destined to play a role in some royal banquet and analogous social occasions aimed at cementing internal cohesion in the Assyrian elite. The parade of foreign objects in Neo-Assyrian palace reliefs include luxury items brought home by soldiers from the sacking of foreign cities or directly by defeated captives, as may be seen in the relief from the Southwest Palace depicting the Assyrian siege and sack of a Western city.[109] The political scope of humiliating the subdued enemy king in the eyes of the Assyrian elite is showed in reliefs depicting foreign rulers bringing finely-executed objects as tribute to the Assyrian king.[110] The richness of the war booty is emphasized in scenes where scribes are portrayed in the act of meticulously counting the items taken from the conquered city: in a wall-panel from the Southwest Palace we see numerous pieces of presumably luxury metalware as two Assyrian scribes are portrayed in the act of recording them on parchment and on a waxed writing-board for administrative purposes.[111] Some of the items represented also turn up in the well-known "royal picnic" of King Assurbanipal and his queen in the royal garden: the set of ablution vessels represented in a relief on the theme of musicians[112] was probably used before the royal meal took place. The elements composing the picnic scene – especially the severed head of the defeated Teumman hanging from a tree in the luxuriant garden, the Assyrian king's personal weapons (the bow and arrows, and the dagger), and the decorated pyxis carved with opposed sphinxes of possibly North Syrian style on a table[113] – are clearly intended to be tangible evidence that the Assyrian king successfully accomplished his divine mission to punish his enemies and that his own claim to universal power was fully legitimised. The detail in the representation of the objects and furniture would have

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[108] See, e.g., the wall-panels of Courts III and VIII from Khorsabad in Matthiae, 1996: figs. 5.2–3, 7.

[109] Room XLVIII, panels 11–13, Southwest Palace. See Matthiae, 1996: figs. 8.20–21.

[110] Room S', panel A, North Palace. See Matthiae, 1998: 135.

[111] Room XXVIII, panels 9–10, from the Southwest Palace. See Matthiae, 1998: 98–99.

[112] Room S', panel E, North Palace. See Matthiae, 1998: 168.

[113] Room S', panels B-C, North Palace. See Matthiae, 1996: fig. 9.16.

attracted a great deal of curiosity from high-ranking people looking at this relief. The king's couch itself could be a foreign object, as suggested by its decoration, which shows motifs of Phoenician and North Syrian art: this piece of furniture could have been part of the Elamite booty[114] or in alternative it could have belonged to the portable royal furniture plundered from the palace of Šamaš-šumu-ukīn, during Assurbanipal's campaign against his disloyal brother.[115] The cumulative display of so many pieces belonging to the royal regalia of vanquished rulers from the "four regions" of the world must have played a crucial role in stressing via material culture the idea that the Assyrian royal power was superior to all other individual royal powers. Royal feasting at the Ninevite court with high-ranking members of the Assyrian elite and foreign delegates would have presented the best opportunities to underline the unrivalled levels of power, prestige and luxury of the Assyrian monarch. The possession of foreign royal paraphernalia could also be marked by inscribing the king's own royal inscription upon the exotic object, as may be observed on one of the alabaster vessels of Egyptian origin witnessing the "Egyptomania" of the Late Assyrian kings.[116] According to the cuneiform epigraph inscribed on one of them, the vessels were booty acquired by Esarhaddon from the palace of the Sidonian King Abdi-milkutti.[117] The object in question also bears an Egyptian inscription, probably dating to the twenty-third Dynasty (c. mid-eighth century BC), referring to Takelot III, the son and successor of Osorkon III.[118] Through the concrete language of objects (the style of which was probably immediately recognizable as foreign by the members of the Assyrian elite) the Assyrian king was able to demonstrate to all his audience in the capital that his claims to universal power were fully legitimate, since no opponent could contrast his god-inspired mission and match his military valour.

The legitimisation of the king was also emphasized through the gifting of foreign royal regalia to crown princes. It is reasonable to surmise that

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[114] Thomason, 2005: 148 n. 69. According to Álvarez-Mon, Assurbanipal's couch could be another allusion to Elamite booty. An Elamite couch, plundered from the royal paraphernalia of Ḫumban-ḫaltaš III, is represented in a relief of a room very close to Room S', namely the one with Assurbanipal's "picnic" scene. See Álvarez-Mon, 2009: 145.

[115] Thomason, 2005: 148.

[116] On the Neo-Assyrian "Egyptomania" see Thomason, 2005: 158–163.

[117] RINAP 4, 70 and the duplicate 71.

[118] RINAP 4, 148.

the display of objects that formerly belonged to other kings was another way crown princes corroborated their claims to the throne. This may be especially true for those Assyrian princes who encountered difficulties within the royal family and the court in their ascent to the power. It is known, for instance, that Sennacherib gave jewels from the booty of Bīt-Amukkāni to Esarhaddon, according to a royal inscription listing various pieces of royal jewellery, which presumably belonged to the defeated Chaldean ruler.[119] Private donations of foreign luxury objects within the royal family were probably celebrated at court with special events. Other occasions to display foreign royal paraphernalia as symbols of the defeated enemies (and of the Assyrian king's victory) probably took the form of cultic rituals in which the Assyrian king acted as the main actor, such as processions and other ritual events.[120] We can therefore conclude that possessions taken from enemy rulers were not only stored in treasure houses of royal palaces,[121] but were presumably displayed on special public occasions aimed to stress the legitimate and unrivalled power of the Assyrian monarch. In this way, the subjugation of the enemies on the battlefield was symbolically reiterated through the display of foreign royal regalia, now under the ownership of the king who accomplished the divine mandate to enlarge the Land of Aššur.

3. Conclusions

Legitimisation was a crucial issue in Assyria, and the solution adopted by generations of kings and their entourages in religious and political discourse to support the expansion of the North Mesopotamian state was grounded in the idea that the king's mission to extend the borders and the dominion of

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[119] SAA 12, 88: 2–e.6: [2]ḪAR.MEŠ KUG.GI *tam-lit* ZÚ [3]GIL KUG.GI *ga-a-gi* KUG.GI ḪAR.MEŠ *ku-bur—a-ḫi* [4ʳ]PAB[?ʾ] *du-ma-qi an-nu-te ša tam-lit-su-nu* [5na4]BABBAR.DIL [na4]BABBAR.DIL.DIL [na4]NÍR [e.6]1 ½ MA 2 ½ GÍN KI.LAL-*šú-nu*, "golden bracelets inlaid with ivory, a golden crown, a golden necklace, rings for the upper arm; all these pieces of jewellery, inlaid with *pappardaliu*-stone, *papparmīnu*-stone, and *ḫulālu*-stone, weighing 1 ½ minas and 2 ½ shekels".

[120] The jewellery (*dumāqu*) is one of the ritual dressing elements characterizing the Assyrian king in his ritual functions. See the cultic commentary SAA 3, 37: 16' and the ritual texts SAA 20, 2 r. iv 1; 15 ii 43'; 16 i 4', r. iv 8, 34; 17: 7; 18: 46, 50.

[121] Amassing jewels suitable for royalty in royal treasuries was an integral part of the idea of kingship, as may be gained from the composition known as *The Underworld Vision of an Assyrian Prince*, see SAA 3, 32: 8.

the land coincided with the divine will to maintain the cosmic order. More importantly, this political project, represented in the form of a re-enactment of a cosmic battle, was presented as legitimised directly by the gods. In this way war became the fundamental ideological motif that structured state ideology and its manifestation in official texts, cultic practices and visual art. The resulting state of constant war against the outside world, accomplished through yearly military campaigns led by the king, was the means by which this expansionist project was realized. The ideological and literary form in which war structured Assyrian royal discourse was a warlike or heroic paradigm applied to the king's person and his deeds. The warlike imagery of the king was a fixed paradigm that served to promote and convey this project in a variety of texts, including royal inscriptions, literary compositions, prophecies and letters from the gods. All these scholarly works – the context of public fruition of which escape us, although it may have been presumably characterized by some official event aimed to spread the political message of the texts – represent different articulations of the strategy of presenting the king's power and his rule as a divine mandate, both when the focus of the discourse is on the king's voice (royal inscriptions) or on the gods' point of view (prophecies and letters from the gods). In addition, new texts and ideological motifs were introduced in the Sargonid period in order to meet the expectations of components of the Assyrian elite in the light of internal political instability that characterized the last phase of Assyria's history. These innovations integrated the warlike paradigm within a broader ideological discourse centered on the importance of the individual king's responsibility and the divine sanction of his policy. The emphasis on the divine protection and sanction of the king's deeds reveals the attempt to explain and justify achievements of certain kings that were controversial and unpopular as perfectly in line with the gods' will. The warlike paradigm, that evoked the mythical combat and the ascent of the victorious warrior god to supremacy, also became the privileged ideological instrument to legitimise irregular succession on the throne of Assyria. Moreover, with the last Neo-Assyrian kings we also see the tendency to orient the imagery of the king more on the idea that he represented a model for universal kingship and wisdom, than on the unrivalled martial connotation of his personal qualities and military actions. This tendency may also be recognized in the development of the royal iconography from the ninth to the seventh century BC. While in Assurnaṣirpal II's palace reliefs in Kalḫu the king is usually represented as a warrior among his soldiers, in Sargon II's age the royal iconography predominantly

focuses on the idea of the Assyrian Empire as a universal rule. Accordingly, the king is not portrayed as a warrior. The king's universal power is visually made manifest by means of parades of courtiers, dignitaries and tribute bearers, as well as by banquets of high-ranking officials, as evidenced in Sargon's reliefs from Khorsabad. These innovations were probably aimed at stressing the ascent of the new administrative class that emerged with the enlargement of the provincial system in Sargon's reign.[122] Although the theme of the king's wars proliferates in the figurative programmes of royal palaces in the Sargonid age, the king of the late Neo-Assyrian period is any longer the protagonist of heroic achievements among his troops. On the contrary, he is usually portrayed as seated on the throne or standing in his royal chariot in a contemplative and detached position. This new royal iconography, that reached its apex in the palatine art of Sennacherib and Assurbanipal in Nineveh, underlines the deep distance existing between the Assyrian king's autocratic power from the world that he dominates. In Assurbanipal's reliefs in the Southwest Palace, the king is shown as the detached spectator who observes the inevitable expansion of the Land of Aššur, conducted by his troops. He is the passive and self-satisfied recipient of innumerable pieces of booty and submitted nations from over the world.[123] Only in royal hunts the king is shown in his martial and dynamic aspect, but these depictions intend to show the traditional prerogative of kings as a symbolic re-enactment of the cosmic triumph on the mythical hosts of chaos.[124] Beyond this meaning, the royal hunting theme is used by the king to consolidate his role as that of a model king. Turning the hunt in the royal park of the capital into something spectacular, the hunting scenes in the North Palace become another occasion for Assurbanipal to emphasize the broad education received by him and the fitness for the rule of the Land of Aššur. As the manifestation of divine functions, the Neo-Assyrian king's person became conceptualized as the realization of human perfection – achievable through the mastery of predictive techniques, a broad education and the privilege to communicate directly with the gods – and the union of the human and divine spheres. This idea implied that loyalty to the king's person was necessary to achieve order and prosperity over the whole world.[125]

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[122] Matthiae, 2007: 57–58.

[123] Matthiae, 2007: 79.

[124] Matthiae, 2007: 80.

[125] On this conceptualization of the royal body see Gaspa, 2016: 87–88.

In any case, the real conduct of war was a long way from the heroic ideal redundantly celebrated in royal annals, epic texts and other literary works. The king did not regularly led his troops in person, he only did so only under exceptional circumstances.[126] Every military action required that the king consulted not only with diviners and magnates, but also with military officers and various informers operating in enemy territory, as may be observed from a look at the Neo-Assyrian royal correspondence. In a Ninevite letter by an unknown sender, for instance, a courtier advises King Esarhaddon not to go to the midst of battle and, on the contrary, to take position on a hill, at a safe distance, as their predecessors would have done.[127] The king-centered description of Assyrian warfare informs the narratives of the annals and other texts praising the heroism of the god-supported warrior, but in reality the responsibility for the military success of the Assyrians and consequently of the expansionist project, was largely due to the king's magnates and his military officials, who personally led the troops and planned operations of attack and siege to foreign cities. This also sheds light on the degree of pragmatism of the members of the ruling class, who knew that the protection of the king's persona was a *conditio sine qua non* for the realization of expansionist projects and for benefitting from the resulting advantages. This does not mean that the theological motivation at the basis of the heroic construct was considered as little more than propaganda: it is reasonable to think that it was the religious level of this ideological construct that facilitated the spread of the idea that the king was carrying a divine mandate and that the gods would have assisted the Assyrian army in battle. From the Middle Assyrian period onwards, and especially in the period of maximum expansion of the Empire, Assyria was a militaristic society: a society whose backbone was the royal army, formed by all men that could be called up for military service. The practical need to continuously obtain men of fighting age from the Assyrian population to accomplish the Empire's expansionist policies made the necessity to get the people's consensus a priority in the political agenda of the Assyrian

[126] Dalley, 2017: 529. Assurbanipal took part in person in military campaigns only rarely, although in his royal inscriptions and palace reliefs great emphasis is put on the humiliation of his enemies in battle. See Frahm, 2017: 190. The death of Sargon II in the battlefield confirms that the king in person participated to military campaigns. However, the decision to accomplish or not this "heroic" task could be affected by political factors as well as evaluation of risks for the king's person in the war zone.

[127] SAA 16, 77 r. 3–8.

ruling elite.[128] This explains the large investment in celebrating the king's military deeds by generations of Assyrian kings and members of their entourage, especially by the court scribes, who practically composed the texts for royal inscriptions and other texts in praise of the king's heroism and at the service of the imperial project.

Also foreign luxury objects acquired through military campaigns in all the "four regions" of the world became an integral part of the heroic construct of the Assyrian royal ideology, although the exact nature of the public ceremonies (of cultic, political as well as private nature) in which they were displayed to celebrate the victorious "warrior of the gods" and the accomplishment of the god-inspired expansionist project is difficult to determine. Presumably, the Assyrian elite's aesthetic experience deriving from the voyeuristic consumption of the war booty, represented in detail on palace reliefs and monuments, constituted another important means through which the internal consensus was obtained or consolidated with the promise that new and pleasant material wealth would have reached Assyria from the whole world thanks to the "warrior of the gods". Both the literary depiction of the "warrior of the gods" in annals and other royal texts aimed at conveying an heroic representation of the king's deeds, and the display of war objects were functional to obtain and consolidate the consensus of both the Assyrian ruling class and local elites. However, as regards foreign policy the real situation concerning the consolidation of the imperial power shows that beyond this heroic pattern, different and more pragmatic strategies were adopted by the Assyrians in their expansionist project, as witnessed by stipulation of alliances with local polities, assignment of bordering territories to foreign rulers as a reward for their cooperation, and prestigious appointments for foreign officials.[129] The career prospects for members of local aristocracies and other social groups of the foreign country within Assyrian imperial administration and army must have been another important means Assyrians employed to obtain cooperation and submission by local polities.[130]

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[128] See Liverani, 2014: 380.

[129] The expansion of the Assyrian state by means of diplomacy, evident from the preserved Neo-Assyrian treaties, enables scholars to correct the traditional view of the Assyrian expansionism as the product of a brutal militarism. See Parpola / Watanabe, 1988: xxiii–xxiv. For the measures adopted in Sargon II's foreign policy see Lanfranchi, 1997: 82, 83–84 and more recently Lanfranchi, 2011: 221, 223.

[130] This is also suggested by numerous foreign names borne by individuals employed in the Neo-Assyrian imperial administration.

In summary, the heroic construct of the "warrior of the gods", formulated through texts, images and foreign royal objects, met with great success in terms of royal propaganda and served the purpose of the Assyrian expansionist project. This heroic construct, whose major traits have been discussed above, worked as an important factor in the strategy of legitimisation of kings in the context and in support of the expansive policy of Middle and Neo-Assyrian rulers, although the political discourse it created was insufficient to solve the longstanding internal dynastic and political problems encountered by the Assyrian elite. This is especially true for the late imperial period of Assyrian history. The murder of Sennacherib in 681 BC and Esarhaddon's war against the regicides that preceded his ascent to the throne revealed the lack of unity within the court milieu and ruling class. Periodical insurgences and plots as well as the brutal execution of high-ranking officials in 670 BC progressively destroyed cohesion within the Assyrian elite. The crisis of legitimacy continued in the reign of Esarhaddon's successor, during which various state officials lost their positions. It is not by chance that the number of royal inscriptions dramatically decreases after 639 BC.[131] Perhaps, this situation could be explained as the direct reflex of what was happening in the Assyrian court: the growing breaking up of the internal consensus to the king's power had a negative impact on the support to the imperial project, of which the legitimising warlike and heroic construct was the backbone, at least on the level of political communication. If we consider the large investment in official texts and monumental art in praise of the heroic king from the ninth century onwards it is possible that the internal strife for power of the groups emerging within the Assyrian elite in the late Neo-Assyrian period deeply conditioned the internal political debate and, consequently, led the scribes to reduce drastically the investment in the traditional image of the warlike and heroic king in official texts. In the case of Assurbanipal, which can be taken as representative of the state ideology of the last reigns, we have seen that the martial achievements against the treacherous enemies are attributed to the gods, not to the warlike and heroic king. In all likelihood, resorting the traditional motif of the *Chaoskampf* and the divine mission of the warrior king was probably felt as insufficient to create new cohesion in an elite that had already experienced internal political division, palace plots and ruthless repression. The elaboration of new text categories to stress

[131] Frahm, 2017: 190.

the divine support to the king's policy, such as prophecies and king-god correspondence, was the learned response to such a new state of affairs, and shows the growing isolation of the king's person within the court and the ruling class.[132] In the case of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal the attempt to control predictive techniques to present their heroic achievements as perfectly coherent with the gods' intentions was functional to depict these rulers as a model of kingship and wisdom,[133] although it constituted the last phase of the history of the warlike paradigm that informed the Assyrian state ideology and its historiographic manifestation.

Seen in a long-term perspective, apart from the problems linked to the everyday running of the Empire and the crisis of legitimisation of the last reigns, the ideological construct based on the warlike and heroic king was decisive in mobilizing the Assyrian political elite and the population of the Land of Aššur towards the complete adhesion to the expansionist project and, consequently, to the acceptance of the necessity of war in all the "four regions" of the world. From the point of view of the relations with foreign polities, in the late Neo-Assyrian period the necessity to follow the traditional heroic construct inherited from Middle Assyrian and early Neo-Assyrian period began to be accompanied by the more pragmatic necessity to show the benefits of participating in the construction of a unique and efficient supranational structure, more in line with the political situation of the late phase of the Assyrian Empire.[134] In any case, the fortune of the legitimising warlike construct of the Assyrian king went well beyond the expectations of those who formulated it. Thanks to visual art of palace reliefs and monuments, the warlike construct shaped the definitive memory of the Assyrians as bellicose people, transmitting to posterity an eulogy of war apparently devoid of the anxieties that troubled the Assyrian ruling elite at the apex of its power.

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[132] This isolation is visible in the royal art of last kings. While Sargon II is represented in the Khorsabad palace reliefs with his dignitaries and officials, from the reign of Sennacherib onwards the king is generally depicted in isolation with his entourage limited to palace attendants, bodyguards and chariot-drivers. This visual representation of the king's person is an indication of the deep distance separating the monarch not only from his troops, but also from the Assyrian aristocracy. See Matthiae, 2007: 79.

[133] On the appropriation of the omen series by Assurbanipal as a cultural strategy aimed at conveying the idea that he was a model king see Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 360–378.

[134] Lanfranchi, 1997: 87.

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Legitimation of War and Warriors in Literary Texts

Simonetta Ponchia

Introduction

When considering Mesopotamian literary texts we can easily observe that fighting receives legitimation at the highest level in the dynamics of cosmic creation and evolution: literary texts describe gods fighting as warriors and defeating adversaries who threaten the hierarchic cosmic order. In the words of B. Pongratz-Leisten: "The combat myth as a model of and for reality underpins all regicentric literature, including the royal inscriptions".[1]

Royal historiography provides ample evidence for the legitimation of the victorious king's warlike actions: it extolls the valour of the victor, which provides the reason and therefore a justification for the defeat and destruction of his enemies; it shows that the enemies are guilty of opposing the divine will which the king interprets and fulfills, and therefore assigns righteousness even to revenge and atrocities.[2] These

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[1] Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 290. The authors also points out that the reference to the Ninurta mythology "constitutes the second level at which royal inscriptions should be read and carries an intentional truth, i.e. the ideological message of the king securing the civic and cosmic order." This upgrades the historiographical tale from a narrative of events to a discourse that is analogous to myth: "Since the Ninurta mythology dominates the plot structure of royal inscriptions, Assyrian historiography should be read as a discourse in tropological terms with the combat myth as the central metaphor framing royal action." (p. 291).

[2] The topic of justification of war has been extensively dealt with by Oded in his book *War, Peace and Empire* (1990); he analyses how the Assyrian royal inscriptions demonstrate that the king fights a *bellum iustum*, at the command of the gods who have the legitimate authority to declare it, and are guarantors of the treaties, and protectors of the king who acts as the rod of their wrath, since he abhors injustice and treachery, so that war is an ordeal for imposing punishment on the guilty. He extensively

principles are proclaimed by means of written and probably recited texts, stelae and rock inscriptions, triumphal celebrations which enacted the public punishment of the enemy, and are commemorated in the names of city gates. These various communication methods overtly refer or allude to mythical representations of conflicts as fundamental metaphors of the divine fight against the forces of chaos. It is especially the assimilation of the king's image and actions to those of Ninurta that is developed in such written and figurative expressions.[3]

However, some margins of ambiguity are evident as well. LKA 62, classified as a victory chant, combines the image of a hunter who battles with donkeys and of a warrior who behaves ferociously towards the people, babies included, seemingly stressing the disproportion between a heroic aggression and the defencelessness or inappropriateness of the target, or allegorically interpreting the royal confrontation with enemies that blindly underestimate its thrust. This trait has provoked a discussion about the nature of the text: some have interpreted it as a parody of military accounts, ultimately aimed at mocking the language of warlike celebrations, while others have maintained that it reflects the ritualistic character of royal hunting.[4]

It therefore seems interesting to consider if and how literary texts differ in interpreting war and assigning to it a place in the cosmic sphere, and especially in human experience, and whether they can be considered testimonies of developing and/or debated views on the topic.

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examines the attestations of these motifs and the expressions that describe the role of the king in protecting allies, and usurpers whose illegal enthronement is a *casus belli*, and especially the enemies who have broken a treaty. Since the role of the king is that of a saviour, benefactor, and shepherd, his action is "for the sake of peace and rehabilitation" (p. 107), his task is to punish the sinners who act against the will of the gods.

3 Cf. discussions and references to previous literature in Pongratz-Leisten, 2001, esp. p. 226 concerning the relation between Tukulti-Ninurta I and Ninurta, whose weapons are mentioned in the narrative of royal military action. *Abūbu* "deluge" and *ašamšātu* "sandstorm," "are to be qualified as mythemes directly taken from the myths Lugal-e and Anzû." And again Pongratz-Leisten, 2015 with additional examples and references.

4 Ebeling, 1949, Edzard 2004, Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 253–258. See now Fink / Parpola 2019.

Tukulti-Ninurta's Epic and Prayer

The "classical" example of legitimation of war is the *Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta* (hereinafter TNE). The text is known from copies from Nineveh and Assur;[5] it has been analysed as exemplary of Middle Assyrian literature and language, and classified as the most extensive example of the Assyrian epic style; it has been considered as an epitome of the Late Bronze Age ideology of war and of a conceptualization of history centered on the Assyro-Babylonian confrontation,[6] and an attestation of a common language used in Late Bronze Age international relations, which acknowledges rules of correct behaviour in war that legitimate royal action and illustrate its correspondence with divine will and plans.

The policy of Tukulti-Ninurta I (1233–1197 BC) – which was ambitious and represented a breaking point in internal as well as international relations – likely needed the justification and demonstration that the king's behavior was rightful and pious. This necessity seems to have been particularly acute in respect to the confrontation with the Babylonian king Kastiliaš.[7]

In the TNE the characters of the two opposing kings are defined by a set of almost formulaic epithets and expressions. Tukulti-Ninurta is *mudû tašimāti*, "observant of the conventions" (II A 25'; II/III D 7); "he placed his reliance on loyalty to the oath" (*ana naṣār māmīti ittakil*, III A/E 21'), "no one among all the kings ever competed with him in war" (*ul išnun matima ina šarrāni kullāti qabalšu mamma*, I A/F 22'); his adversary, the Babylonian king Kaštiliaš is instead *ētiq māmīti*, "oath-breaker" (I B 33'),

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[5] The text, preserved in incomplete form, was masterfully reconstructed and edited by P. Machinist (1978). To his reconstruction, interpretation and translation of the text, the following synthetic description – provided here with the aim of illustrating the relevance of this fundamental piece of literature to the present topic – is totally indebted. An English translation has more recently been provided in Foster, 1996.

[6] The epic tradition can be studied on a new basis, after the new edition of the Zimri-lim epic stemming from the Mari archive (Guichard, 2014); this text is an example of a well developed historical narrative of war in the Old Babylonian period that may be analyzed in the attempt of better framing Middle Assyrian expressions within a genre perspective.

[7] The conquest of Babylon was seemingly achieved in two steps, starting from the campaign the king led in the 13th year of his reign; Kaštiliaš was at some point brought to Assyria as a prisoner and his capital city eventually conquered (Yamada, 2003: 153–177, with a chronological reassessment also on the basis of chronicles' records). This prolonged military effort is recounted in the unique heroic narrative of the TNE.

in fact "he neglected the oath" (*išiṭ māmīta*, I A/F 28'), *gillata ṣaburta ibni,* "crime, falsehood he perpetrated" (I A 29'), *gillet mātīšu šupšuqā imīdū arnū*, "the crimes of his land were oppressive, (its) sins many" (I A/F 33'), his attitude is that of the *targīgi akṣi lā šemî*, "the wicked, the obstinate, the disobedient" (II A 26'; II/III D 8), and in direct speeches and narrative it is qualified as mischievous: *multarhutka* "your insolence" (IV A rev. 19'), *ana ṣabrutīni ginâ ikappud nirta uṣammar* "conspiring in falsehood against us, he regularly plans on murder"(V A 24'), *ūmīšam ana hulluq māt Aššur šutruṣat ubānšu* (V A 25') "daily he plots to destroy the land of Aššur, with his finger stretched out", etc.

Before narrating the outburst of war, the relations between the two kingdoms of Assyria and Babylonia are reviewed: they include the sending of messages and commercial contacts, and have a history of oath-regulated relations established by the kings' predecessors, although the Babylonians repeatedly appear as violators of the sworn agreements (II A 25'–36', the end of the passage is badly damaged). This is an interpretation of the intermittent but nevertheless frequent hostilities between Assyria and Babylonia that were probably sometimes concluded by treaties (such as those recorded in the *Synchronistic History*). The illustration of the past and persisting disloyal attitude of the Babylonians provides a key for interpreting the latest events within a historical horizon that may contribute to enhancing anti-Babylonian sentiments or even be agreed upon by a pro-Assyrian party in Babylon.[8]

According to TNE, hostile Babylonian acts included the detaining of messengers and hindering of merchants' activities (II/III 10'f), as well as the most obnoxious actions, i.e. plundering cities and massacring people. As a response, Tukulti-Ninurta sent messages that contain accusations (II/III D 7–18, only fragmentarily preserved) and specific reproaches of disrespect of the rules of war and battle (III A 1'–8'). Against the breaking of the war code there stood the treaty tablet (*ullama ša māmīt berīni ṭuppa ana bēl šamê ašassi*, "so I raise the treaty tablet (made) between us and read aloud to the lord of heaven", III A 9'). In such a situation, war is, as stressed by Liverani,[9] an ordeal (*ina nanmurtinīma ša qabli dēn*

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[8] The Euphratic line, with its important enclaves such as Suhu, was also involved in the rivalry with the Hittites (see Cancik-Kirshbaum, 2008).

[9] "Though most of the examples of the ordalic character of war come from the Hittite sources, the most elaborated treatment is to be found in the epic of Tukulti-Ninurta. The poem – though not unique in middle-Assyrian literature – constitutes a major effort by

berīni ... [ ], "when we meet in battle, let the judgement between us be [decided?]" (III A 13'), *arkat ahāmiš i niprus*, "let us investigate the case together" (19'). The outcome of the confrontation is already decided with "we shall meet on this day, in the manner of a just man (*kīnu*) (who) takes [the spoil] of an evildoer (*hābilu*)", (14'); *ina isin tamhāri šâtu ētiq māmīti ai elâ pagaršu liddū*, "in this festival of battle, may the oath-breaker not rise up, (but) let them throw down his corpse" (20').

Indeed, once oath-breaking has taken place, friendly relationships cannot just be re-established, but a juridical/sacral procedure of punishment of the culprit is necessary, and at this point "peace will not be made without conflict … good relations will not come about without a fight.." (III A 15'f*: ul išakkan salīmu bālu mithuṣi* [...] *ul ibašši ṭubtu bālu šitnuni* …).[10] Kaštiliaš provokes the gods' wrath, which strikes his country and people too, after the city-gods abandon their shrines (I B 36'–45'). The king's correct behaviour that materializes in the victorious Assyrian reaction, is the actualization of the divine nature of Assyrian kingship (I A/F 10'–27'); from this divine origin derives royal pre-eminence in battle: *ul išnun mātima ina šarrāni kullāti qabalšu mamma*, etc., "no one among all the kings ever competed with him in war" (22').

A crucial point in the narrative is the transformation of the enemy and his tardy understanding of and repentance for his mistakes: *K. ana ša ibā'u šipar ilāni qerebšu nukkur*, "K. because he had transgressed the command of the gods, was transformed" (III A/E 22'). This transformation is induced by fear and appears as the attack of a demon-induced illness (*urti šarri danni kīma alê zumuršu iksi*, "the command of the mighty king paralyzed his body like an *alû*-demon/illness"; 24').The Babylonian repents for having neglected the Assyrian's messengers and messages, and admits he has sinned, in a sentence which demonstrates that the king represents the entire body of his kingdom and people: "the crimes of my land (*gillet mātēya*) have become oppressive; (its) sins (*arnū*) many", and therefore deserves the divine punishment implied by the treaty tablet (*māmīt*

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the Assyrian scribes to continue the competition against Babylon, already won on the battle-field, at the level of culture and ideology. The poem is a celebration of the victory, but it is also a justification thereof. The conquest of Babylon, the plunder of the royal palace and the temples, the 'deportation' of the gods to Assyria, brought about some sacrilegious features – in view of the old prestige of the Babylonian culture and religion." (Liverani, 1990: 156).

[10] Cf. Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 213ff.

Šamaš, 29'; *ṭuppi lā enê*, "irrevocable tablet", 30'; *rikilti abbêya*, "treaty of my fathers" 32', etc.). The gods testify to his guilty bahaviour and the ruler's sins fall upon his subjects, his herd, who cannot be saved (from a merciless hand [*ana qāt lā padî*], and imprisonment [*ṣibtu*], 35'; from a narrow pit without exit [*ana pašuqti halti ša lā elê*], 36'). A manifestation of divine hostility and impending disaster is the impossibility of obtaining divine messages through omina or dreams.

The section narrating the development of the battle is only partly preserved, and the exact position of the preserved fragments is not completely clear.[11] Crucial and relatively well perserved sections are cols. IV and V (esp. fragm. A) where some phases of the battle can be followed. They include the choice by Kaštiliaš of a strategy – the inundation of fields – that does not conform to the heroic code of fighting, but is also destined to fail when the spring flood ceases, and of movements that delay the battle on open ground. A central point in this strategy is the deceiving attitude of Kaštiliaš, who does not answer clearly to TN's messengers and his invitation to fight according to the heroic code.[12] This attitude fully legitimizes TN's plundering of Babylonian cities (IV A 17'f). Finally, Kaštiliaš' answer arrives and it is an arrogant one, enjoining to TN to wait for the completion of Kaštiliaš' preparations, i.e. asking that these rules be respected in his regards. But Kaštiliaš operates deceitfully with the aim of taking his enemy by surprise, not knowing that he is being observed by the Assyrians. They, with the help of Aššur and in the rush of the attack, even neglect to wear their body armour to fall upon the enemies like birds of prey.

The basic principle is elaborated with stylistic variations in a lengthy discourse of the warriors, who fully share the code of honour expressed by their lord (col. V). After these long preparatory phases and various proclamations, a pitched battle takes place, with the major gods opening the way for the Assyrians (V A 31'–40'). The soldiers, guided by their king, throw themselves into the heroic battle.

A victory such as this also gives the Assyrians the right to pillage.

Legitimization of war appears to be developed on two levels contemporaneously: the king acts heroically like Ninurta and according

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[11] Cf. also the image of Kaštiliaš who on the battle-field fled alone (III C 9'–25', although the badly damaged passage cannot be fully understood). It is another image of the enemy used in Assyrian royal inscriptions.

[12] "So come forth fiercely, and fight the battle for which you strive. Show your weapons; find your satisfaction in the struggle for which your lust burns." (IV A 27'f).

to the correct rules that the gods protect; his enemy contravenes the rules of heroic behaviour which are tightly connected with a legal-sacral procedure, and is therefore deprived of divine support.

The TNE uses sentences not only typical of an international lexicon, a code of diplomacy and propaganda well known in and shared by the Near Eastern courts, but which can be connected to other fragments of historical narratives and to the *Synchronistic history*, as far as the use of direct speeches and references to treaties are concerned, thus defining a scheme of historical interpretation that provides a fundamental model for Assyrian Royal Inscriptions as well. The presence of copies of TNE in Assurbanipal's library testifies to the use of this text as a model of literary composition and historical interpretation, possibly because of the concern of the later king for the Babylonian problem and in view of the representation in his inscriptions of the divine judgment of his enemies' political behaviour.

To summarize, the following aspects seem to characterize this literary work: – exaltation of royal action and construction of a royal image on the model of divine heroes; – definition of the role of the king as head of a heroic elite, as well as embodiment of his land, with stress on the role of the military aristocracy as a literary motif, or as a reflection of actual political choices (perhaps connected with the movement of the capital from Assur to Kar-tukulti-ninurta?); – definition and exaltation of the rules of the heroic code of battle, as a political program of expansion which – while expressed according to traditional motifs and according to a juridical interpretation of conflicts – struck Babylon itself instead of simply reassessing the boundary line in favor of Assyria by means of campaigns of more limited impact, as had happened before.

The rationale, expressed in the Epic through the narrative describing the Babylonian king Kaštiliaš as traitor of the oath and deceitful vis-à-vis the code of battle, is also condensed in a prayer to the national god Aššur (KAR 128 + 129).[13] The text firstly extols Aššur, to whom Enlil has entrusted supreme power and who is the champion of the gods against evil. The god's holy city Assur is described as being surrounded by a *kippat limuttim*, "a circle of evil" that is formed by the ensemble of enemy countries (l. 18'); they are banded together (*mithari*š) against Aššur and his righteous shepherd, the king, and are ready to repay favour and benevolence with desplicableness and revolt. The enemies bind together to

[13] Ebeling, 1918: 62–72; Foster, 2005: 318–323.

attack the god's country: "Night and day the (foreign) countries are craving for the destruction of your marvels, and apply themselves to overthrow your towns from above and below" (l. 26'f); they trust in their own strength and despise Aššur's ordinances.[14] To Aššur the king addresses his prayer in order to obtain protection and help for his army and land. A question which deserves a thorough scrutiny is the relation between Aššur and Enlil, since the former seems to smite those gods insubmissive to the latter. This seemingly Marduk-like role of Aššur in this text opens questions about the interest the text may have elicited even in later times in the elaboration of theology regarding Aššur, and when the text was copied or modified.

In any case, it may be noted that the attack of evil forces against the land of Aššur is described using words and style similar to those employed in later royal prayers that also stress the Assyrian king's position as righteous sufferer and his need of divine help to withstand the compact front of enemy forces.[15] Similar motives occur in Assurnaṣirpal I's and Assurbanipal's prayers as part of the development of a specific line of theological thought that represents them as protagonists of events in which cosmic confrontations manifest themselves: the king who trusts in the gods and depends on them, versus the ensemble of enemy forces. Due to the role of the king, chosen by the gods as their champion in maintaining the world order, this fight is the image and actualization of the fight between good and evil.

The Cuthean Legend of Naram-Sin

The same view is developed, with different style and setting, in the Cuthean Legend. In this text the reflection upon the royal attitude towards enemies and war concentrates on the problem of royal behaviour when the "heroic protocol" leads to a failure, apparently because imperfectly interpreted and accomplished. Consideration of past and present circumstances brings

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[14] Although to find a specific setting of the prayer is difficult, the problems TN had to face can be considered. J. Llop, 2012: 213ff., on the basis of the information derived from epistolary reports, lists the attacks Assyria suffered. They included assaults in the agricultural areas and on towns in the Jezira, concentrations of threatening enemy troops, attacks on merchants, the necessity of reinforcing fortifications in the Tell Sabi Abyad agricultural region, menace from the Suteans with whom eventually a treaty was signed by the viceroy of Hanigalbat, treating both parties as equals and apparently without the Assyrian king's sanction.

[15] Ponchia, 2019, with previous literature.

to the fore a key question, that of the margins of arbitrariness of royal action and the king's responsibility.[16] And the answer is crystal-clear: even if motivated by dire events the king is not allowed to act arbitrarily – i.e. without divine assent – and undertake an action he feels obliged to take.

This text is known in an OB version from two manuscripts from Sippar, in a MB one from Bogazköy, and in a first millennium edition with 6 copies from Nineveh, one from Sultantepe and one from Kiš, clearly a school exercise.[17] Due to the only partial preservation of the various versions it is difficult to evaluate how much the most recent version elaborates and reinterprets the ancient ones. The text's basic assumption is that war is only legitimate when authorized by the gods, as can be deduced from the later and best preserved manuscripts.[18]

The composition is labelled from the beginning as a preceptive text by the words: [*ṭupšenna pitēma*][19] *narâ šitassi*, "[open the tablet-box and] read out the stela".[20] It begins with a reference to the legendary king

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[16] Lanfranchi, 2003, esp. p. 102 on the illustration of the fact that "the king has the sole, final and total responsibility for his political behaviour".

[17] See Goodnik-Westenholz, 1997: 263 (from Boğazköy Hittite versions are possibly also extant), and more in details p. 269 (OB manuscripts), 281 (MB), 296ff. (NA/NB).

[18] OB fragmentary exemplars – of an original that according to the editor might total 600 lines compared to the 180 of the NA version (Goodnick-Westenholz, 1997: 263) – preserve the account of Naram-sin's defeat by the enemy hordes, his desperation (the sentence, cf. *ibid*., p. 272 for interpretation, *iâši palê mīnam ubla*, "what have I brought upon myself and my reign?", iii 13, seems to have an echo in the standard version of Gilgamesh: *ana mannīya Ur-šanabi inaha idāya* (…) *ul aškun dunqa ana ramānīya*, "For whom of my (kind/people), Ur-šanabi, did my arms grow exhausted? (…) Not for myself did I establish good!", XI 311-313), destruction of Akkad by a force similar to the deluge (iv 10'f: *māt A*[*kka*]*di uštemi uhtalliq mātam*, "it transformed the land of Akkade. It destroyed the land"); the MB recension refers to Enmerkar who did not write a stela, narrates the creation by Ea of warriors, strong and primeval but not destined to destroy mankind, and partly preserves the account of their attack on Akkad.

[19] The beginning is preserved in this form in the NA version (cf. Goodnik-Westenholz, 1997: 302), and in the colophon of the OB one (*ibid*., p. 278); it was already used as a title in OB times (*ibid*., 263).

[20] Cf. Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 88: "In the Mesopotamian W*eltanschauung* any failure of the ruler to pay due attention to the gods could provoke their wrath and lead them to abandon their cities, which left these cities bereft of divine protection and vulnerable to enemy invasion. This theological explanation of political crisis dominates the literary compositions of the Curse of Akkad and the Sumerian City Lament, both of which are related to the collapse of the Ur III empire. It also demonstrates again the close link

Enmerkar who did not leave a stela, with the instructive account of his experience concerning the interpretation of divine will – which caused a dreadful destiny to be inflicted on his descendents, of whom Naram-Sin appears to be one. This prevented Naram-Sin from praying for his ancestor and learning how to behave.[21] Thus, when history seemed to repeat itself, Naram-Sin was not able to understand the situation correctly, and decided to act even though a divine message was lacking – as is also recounted, although the circumstances are different, in the *Curse of Agade*.

The tale of the enemy hordes and their attack on Purušhanda, Šubat-Enlil, etc., as far as Magan and Meluhha, combines elements of various other tales and historical accounts, describing an indomitable army that devastates everywhere and severely menaces Naram-sin's reign. Naram-Sin's historical tradition is reinterpreted by associating memories contained in historiographic and literary texts. The latter suggest images such as that of the 7 brother kings, who have names that seem to preserve a Hurrian flavor,[22] but may be compared both with the seven heroes, captains of Enmerkar's army in the tale of *Lugalbanda in the Wilderness* (C 59–70),[23] and with the Sibitti (ll. 37–46). These enemies are so savage and frightening that they appear as a demonic force and it is necessary to ascertain their human nature by pricking them to see that they bleed like humans. The description given in LKA 62, representing enemies as donkeys, may perhaps be considered a variant of this motif. Facing this extreme situation Naram-sin decides, with a hubristic attitude,[24] to attack the enemies even though he does not obtain a divine consensus by means of extispicy. The result is disastrous with repeated defeats and the ensuing deep discouragement and depression of the ruler.

When finally Naram-Sin understands that he must wait for a divine decision and response, he obtains an answer that is rather surprising: he has to desist from his attempt to destroying his enemies: "Desist! Do not

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between the king's actions and the welfare of his country, the latter represented by its constituents, the city states. Moreover, this explanation of political crisis is integrated into the scholarly genres of chronicles and omen literature, the latter of which includes references to some of the omens reportedly recorded under the kings of Akkad."

[21] Schaudig, 2012: 438, points out the fact that punishment can be imposed on a descendant, as in the case of Šulgi and Ibbi-Sin.

[22] Goodnik-Westenholz, 1997: 311 with additional details.

[23] The text is here referred to according to the edition of Vanstiphout, 2003.

[24] Cf. ll. 79–83.

destroy the seed of destruction" (*ezib zēr halqātî lā tuhallaq*, l. 130). The reason is that they are a force at the disposal of Enlil and his angry heart and instrument to put into action a plan of widespread destruction and subversion of civil order: "city will fight with city, household with household, father with son, brother with brother, young man with young man, friend with neighbour. They will not speak truth with one another…" (*ālu itti* [*āli bītu*] *itti bīti inakkir / ab*[*u itti māre ahu*] *itti ahi /* [*eṭlu*] *itti eṭli rū'ua itti itbari / itti ahāmeš kīnāti ul ītammû*, ll. 138–145). It is impossible to interrupt such a situation with human forces, even those of a powerful king; the message left to posterity by Naram-Sin is to respond to blind violence by maintaining human foundations, strengthening the defensive system, and preserving a treasure that will become useful after the fury has ceased, with some significant similarities to the role of Atrahasis in the tale of the flood. The strategy ultimately suggested by Naram-Sin is to answer with kindness to violence: *ana gullultīšunu rīb dumqi*, "requite their wickedness with kindness" (l. 172).

The whole tale – including the reference to the exceptionally savage character of the enemies and the mission of the king as protector of his people – indicates that the issue concerns an imperial dimension of the royal mission. Conquests seem to have reached the boundaries of the world. The characterization of the enemies as savage is carried to the extreme of classifying them as quasi-demonic beings, the only ones that can oppose the king's military force. At the limits of expansion, which coincide with the imperial dimension, the confrontation is between good and evil, but fatally admits that hostile forces are destined to exist by virtue of a divine decision, and will be summoned again by Enlil.[25] The problem of legitimation of war as well is moved to extreme consequences, arguing that it depends totally upon divine will, expressed by the divine ominous utterance. Even when assailed by enemies, the king needs divine endorsement to kill them.[26] If this is lacking the king can only offer passive resistance, trusting in his defensive strategy, or even answer violence with kindness. This may correspond to preserving the positive principles of

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[25] *ana arkât ūmē Enlil ana lemutti inaššâ rēssun*, "In future days, Enlil will summon them from evil" (l. 132).

[26] Melville, 2016 observes that divination was a necessary procedure to illustrate that "The divine mandate to campaign provided the justification needed to assure soldiers that the risk and killing involved were necessary" and that "Rituals performed at the army's muster and before it crossed into enemy territory also helped soldiers transition

society and its government against blind and destructive violence, but this conclusion may also be considered as an answer to the question of royal responsibility: repeated experiences of errors demonstrate that the ruler's responsibility is to interpret divine will and act accordingly.[27] It seems, however, that the initial cause of the critical situation the king has to face, is left unexplained, i.e. whether his only fault consists of his incorrect management of the crisis, or whether a previous sin – even perpetrated by an ancestor – may have determined it.

The final exhortation for the sage scribes to recite the inscription clarifies that this view is the result of a wise reflection, a reflection on the mission of the king, as an agent of world order according to the divine scheme. This leads to admission of the existence of an evil principle, but at the god's orders and in the gods' service. This situation imposes the avoidance of any arbitrary decision on the part of the prince; arbitrariness, i.e. the neglect of cult procedures, would signify failure and the end of the government of a king as savior of his people. We may presume that this was also Enmerkar's mistake, although the allusion to his mistake is not clear, nor it is possible to find a relation with the Sumerian tale of Lugalbanda where the latter hero asked about the causes that prevented Enmerkar from defeating Aratta.[28] The image of the wise and solicitous king seems rather to be of he who prays, lamenting his enemies' mass attack and invoking

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mentally from the constraints of peacetime living, with its prohibition against killing, to the physical demands and moral license of wartime" (p. 221 with previous bibliography).

[27] Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 276: "Any failure with respect to either of these responsibilities led irrevocably to abandonment by the gods and, implicitly, to the ultimate collapse of the cosmic order. As such, the king served as mediator between the primordial past and the historical present." Lanfranchi, 2003: 107 argues that the *Sin of Sargon* may be analyzed as the attempt to distinguish two levels in the royal conduct: the king can be held responsible of a mistake and punished by the gods, but to a personal level – at the moment of his death, which may be interpreted as such a punishment because violent and ignominious – whereas his institutional person is not involved in sin and sanction, because ritual practices legitimize royal action and avert culpability. This corresponds to accentuating the image of the wise king, who complies with his duty of protection by resorting to the cultic sphere. Cf. also Schaudig, 2012.

[28] Although it seems impossible to illustrate this, the stalemate of Enmerkar's troops in the Sumerian tale may have been at the basis of a tradition which attributed him misfortune and mistakes. See Vanstiphout, 2003, with previous bibliography, for text and translation. Omina play an important role in this Sumerian composition.

the help of Aššur, or who waits for the prophetic speeches of Ištar, such as those preserved in the collections of Neo-Assyrian prophecies.

Erra and Išum

The question of the relation between gods and destructive power is the object of an articulated reflection in the poem of Erra and Išum, where the necessity of violence to maintain cosmic order is the object of debate, and its role acknowledged after a demonstrative discourse.[29] Even the problem of arbitrariness appears to be shifted from the royal to the divine level. The text, known from NA and NB copies, praises the war god Erra/Nergal; the myth is apparently not known or part of the tradition elsewhere, but is modelled on myths of conflict that – while offering aetiologies of various aspects of the cosmos – seem rather to be used as a repertoire of expressive strategies for articulating an independent line of reasoning. As in the TNE, direct speech is widely used; its aim, however, is not to praise heroism, but to deepen an investigation of its nature and of the role of war in the cosmos.

The opening of the tale presents the scene of the god of war Erra oscillating between two conditions: pacific and sleepy inactivity – similar to the attitude recommended to the king in the counsel of the *Cuthean Legend* – in which he indulges in pleasures with his wife Mami, and the destructive violence of the Sibitti, "filled with terror", *malû pulhāti* (I 24), whose nature and scope is simply to destroy and who function as weapons when the god gets angry (*ublama libbāka ana šakān kamāri*, "(when) your heart is inclined to accomplish destruction", I 42). This destructive force is not however silent and quiet, but its very nature urges to battle and destruction, representing these as heroic ideals of life that are necessary to maintain order and hierarchy by means of terror.

The peculiarity of this text is that it presents these alternatives as a discursive debate, which derives its arguments from the nature of the god of war (cf. I 109–119) and the fact that men seemingly do not pay due respect to him. The necessity of war is articulately demonstrated by the Sibitti who advocate the need to prove the god's heroism in order to avoid that divine authority should weaken and its instruments disappear through inactivity. When Erra embraces this theory and expounds it to Marduk, the

[29] For a description of the poem and its motifs in the framework of heroic poetry, see recently George, 2013.

theme of divine authority is visualized in the image of the fading splendour of the god's apparel, seemingly a metaphor for his fading authority. However, as Marduk says, to unleash violence means to subvert, not to keep the cosmos in order, and the god therefore asks: "Men that survived to the flood and saw the accomplished task, should I/you lift [m]y/your weapons and destroy (this) rest?" (I 145f). It seems that the question could be rephrased in terms deducible from the *Cuthean Legend*: is a principle of violence and destruction really necessary to maintain order, or, to the contrary, would order consist instead of banishing this principle?

With Erra on the war path, as finally conceded by Marduk who leaves his throne – the central knot of the tree that keeps the universe together – violence, personified by the war god, remains as sole guardian of the cosmic order. Erra's purpose, as described in the – unfortunately fragmentary – Tablet II, is to assure respect for Marduk by means of pitiless violence against humankind, as a way to punish its excesses and disrespect of divinity.

Tablet III is devoted to discussing the legitimation of violence, and seems to reach the conclusion that its cause, if not justification, is violence itself. Išum's words condense the reference to other myths (*Atra-hasis* and *Enuma eliš*) and ask a question: "why have you malevolently planned (*lemutta takpud*) against god and man?" (C 36).[30]

This is a conclusion that Marduk, even when he abandons his throne, does not encourage or share, and the myth of the deluge is reinterpreted by distinguishing the role of Marduk from that of Erra, but also recognizing that the "malevolent plan" of Enlil was necessary. It is now Erra who takes care of acting accordingly and has the full power to subvert all the principles that govern an ordered society (III A). From Erra's perspective, when Marduk abandoned his seat he agreed to the perpetration of destruction (III C 36-56). But in Išum's answer the power of destruction and war is separated from Marduk's will and fully attributed to Erra; the elements of the latter's power are enumerated and described in III D 1–16, showing how all aspects of cosmic, human, and animal life are now under Erra's control, how all the temples depend on him, and how the gods listen to him – including Anum and Enlil – and remarking that the principle of violence and destruction is fully in the god's hands. This statement is

[30] The expression *lemutta takpud* describes Enlil's resolution in *Atra-hasis*, thus alluding to the god's decision to destroy mankind, and is used in TNE to define the guilty behaviour of Kaštiliaš.

reaffirmed at the beginning of the following tablet: *qurrādu Erra ša rubê Marduk zikiršu la tašhut / ša* dim–kur–kur–ra *āl šar ilāni rikis mātāti taptaṭar rikissu / ilūtka tušannima tamtašal amēliš*, "O warrior Erra, you are the one who feared not noble Marduk's word! You have undone Dimkurkurra, 'the bond of the world', the city of the king of the gods. You changed your divine nature and made yourself like a man!" (IV 1–3).

Although the god of violence has full authority, he is, however, said to act like a man.[31] This sentence seems to mean that the responsibility for destruction is removed from the divine world and downgraded to the human world. But it also hints at the fact that war and violence are the means humans use. This interpretation may be viewed as a variation, and a more radical view, vis-à-vis the *Cuthean Legend*'s image of enemy human hordes as agent of destruction. The result of unleashing violence which causes the destruction of all the elements of order, from family to civilian and religious bonds is analogous (tab. IV), but demonstrates that the gods are the source of all authority. War is the main tool of destruction, in all comparable to natural cataclysms caused by the gods, but physically performed by humans. It is legitimized insofar as it is part of the comprehensive cosmic design, although difficult to justify, especially when its target is a sacred town such as Babylon, to which the *kidinnu* (a protected and privileged status, IV 33) was granted. Attacking temples – and the cities where they are located – determines the hostility of their patron gods, who then refuse to maintain justice (e.g.: IV 71: *dīni kitti ul addani purussê māti ul aparras*, "I will not pronounce just verdicts; I will not deliver judgments for the land"). The situation is summarised in IV 104–107: "Hero Erra, the righteous you have killed, the unrighteous you have killed …" Moreover, in the onslaught of violence, communication channels between gods and men (prayers and omens) are interrupted and the poem poses therefore the other crucial question: how can this relation be re-established and order recovered?

The scope of the poem is therefore to demonstrate that although the gods allow violence as a fundamental instrument for keeping order, because it forces mortals to respect divine authority and devotion, violence must have a limit, and clemency is never completely forgotten, as the repeated speeches of Išum, Erra's alter ego,[32] reveal. In fact, the poem concentrates on the

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[31] See Ponchia, 2013–2014 for additional comments and references.

[32] It may be admitted that the dialogue between Erra and Išum is an interior one– as suggested not only by the ambiguity of the subject of the first lines of the poem, but also by

possibility of finding salvation, on how wrath may relent and reconciliation take place, as expressed in Tablet V. At the end Erra re-occupies his throne in the Emeslam of Cutha; the role of Išum, who in the chaos of fighting kept arguing according to rational principles, is acknowledged, and a verdict of pacification and new prosperity is pronounced. The two personalities of Erra and Išum coalesce again in Nergal.

Similarly to the conclusion of the *Cuthean Legend* – which advises the future ruler that a stela has been inscribed and left in Nergal's cella in the Emeslam – salvation is promised by a text that conveys a message of wisdom. And again like the *Cuthean Legend*, it is wisdom that generates piety, and piety that gives hope of salvation: "In the sanctum of the learned (*ina aširti ummâni*), / where they shall constantly invoke my name, / I shall grant them understanding (*uzunšunu apetti*) (…) In the house where this tablet is placed, let Erra infuriate, let the Sibitti kill: the sword of destruction will not come near, salvation will be established" (V 56–58) . Devotion is demonstrated by way of reasoning.

Texts in Dialogue

As revealed by cross references, these texts dialogue, indirectly or even directly, on various themes connected with war and violence: heroism, relations between men and gods, the fate of cities, whose role as capitals and the seats of major gods confers a cosmic value on the vicissitudes that involve them – and, ultimately, the necessary existence of disorder and violence.

A schematic view of elements and images belonging to the opposite categories of order and disorder is proposed as follows:

order	disorder
king as hunter king and warriors who fight according to the heroic code king as interpreter of divine messages construction of temples wisdom	animal-like enemies demon-like enemies surrounding chaotic forces lack of divine messages from oracles disruption of family and social bonds destruction as a cosmic event

The king is legitimated to fight and kill his enemies, but he should never neglect to inquire into and comply with divine will. This is the authority

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the meaning of Išum's name, which can be read as "zealous slaughterer" = *ṭābihu* (šum) *na'adu* (i) (Lambert, 1958: 400).

on which both the forces of order and disorder depend, and they may be employed in equal part by the gods to affirm their rulership and achieve the fulfillment of their inscrutable plans. In this perspective both heroic valour and blind violence can be seen as instruments in the gods' hands. Although order and disorder, good and evil, are distinguished, from a human perspective there is an indistinct zone between the two, and human understanding is unable to explain the causes of events. Two issues especially stimulated theological research and historical consideration. The first is the destruction of cities and holy places, such as Babylon, as well as the construction of new ones that modified the existent order, and became image of the fact that worldly order is destined to change. The other issue is the apparently inexplicable reversal of royal fortunes, which raises questions concerning the king's responsibility and ability to interpret divine will.

Some motifs may even be allusions to specific political choices. One such is the moving or substitution of the capital city, which is the seat of the god. In his inscriptions Tukulti-Ninurta I records the construction of a new cult centre (*bīt ilāni*) and a sanctuary of Aššur (*atmanīšu*) "on the bank opposite my city" *eberti alīya* (RIMA 23:89) *al d.Aššur ina ebertān* (l. 97ff.). The construction of a new capital and city of the god is stigmatized in historiographic texts, such as the *Weidner Chronicle*, which says:

> "(Sargon) took earth out of the ground and, facing Babylon, made a city and named it Agade. Because of the [sacrilege] he had committed, Enlil changed the word he had said and, from the East to the West, there was a revolt against him, and he was afflicted with restlessness."

And *Chronicle ABC 20A* recites:

> "(Sargon) took earth away from the clay pit of Babylon and built, near Agade, a replica of Babylon. Because of the wrong he had done the great lord Marduk became angry and wiped out his people by famine. From the East to the West there was a revolt against him, and he was afflicted with restlessness (20ff.)".

These entries give examples, by resorting to the models of the Akkad dynasty, of kings who alter the existing order and sinfully fail to interpret the divine will.[33]

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[33] On this topic and the judgement of Assyrian kings' achievements see also Matthiae, 1998: 62–64.

The motif is varied in *Erra and Išum*, where the problem is proposed of how Marduk himself, creator of the cosmos, could conceive of the destruction of even his own holy city. The solution is to admit two distinct authorities and the possibility of the temporary substitution of Marduk's rulership, a situation, however, to which Marduk in his supreme wisdom gives his consent. Faith in the divine plan of an ordered cosmos brings the conclusion: "Then, let Akkad arise to slay them all, to rule them, every one", IV 136. A sentence that explain both destruction and reconstruction in cosmic terms and that provides a reason for changes of fortune, and destruction and reconstructions in historical terms.

That these entries include an allusion to specific historical events seems plausible, but it is more difficult to identify what these may be, or if various memories are combined. What appears worth stressing is that human and especially royal responsibility for causing divine wrath are not denied, but are viewed from a wider, cosmic perspective, from which only piety and wisdom provide the king with tools for interpreting divine will correctly and so fulfilling his duty of righteous shepherd. For this reason, when no other clues are available, the king, although with weapons at his disposition and able to wage war, has no other choice than to stick to the side of "order" in the human world and to face wickedness (*gullulti*) with good (*dumqi*) (*Cuthean Legend* 172).

Although sometimes not fully understood, divine designs are those that justify war and violence, and the adherence to these designs, including both the respect for the rules of honour and the reception of specific messages of approbation by means of divination, is what kings must be able to demonstrate to their present and future audiences.

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The Treatment of Warfare in the Legendary Traditions of Seleucus

Daniel Ogden

In his 1996 book, *The Cities of Alexander the Great*, Peter Fraser formulated the hypothesis that there had once stood beside the *Alexander Romance* a "Seleucus Romance", a biography of Seleucus composed in a comparably fictionalised and romantic style. Such a document, he thought, underlay §§52–70, especially §§56–61, of Appian's *Syriake*, his so-called "Seleucus excursus", on the basis of its generic resemblance to the *Alexander Romance*.[1] His key statement reads as follows:[2]

> "As always with Appian, the precise, immediate sources of his narrative, and their dates, remain conjectural, but we can at least see here, not concealed by subsequent accretion, a romantic narrative of early date.[3] To this we may, if we choose, add the fully developed mythology of the foundation of Antiocheia by Seleucus preserved by Malalas, which is a counterpart to the story of the foundation of Alexandria by Alexander in the A-text of the [sc. *Alexander*] *Romance*."

Fraser might also have noted, by way of context, that Seleucus' son and heir, the worthy Antiochus I, at any rate did eventually find his way into a romance proper, in the form of the wicked and incestuous King Antiochus of Antioch of the History of Apollonius, King of Tyre romance (a fifth- or sixth-century AD Latin text, thought to have second- or third-century

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1 Fraser, 1996: 36–29. Approval of Fraser's hypothesis at Stoneman, 2008: 61, Jouanno, 2002: 19, Primo, 2009: 29–35, Hillgruber, 2010: 99, Kosmin, 2014: 94–100. Goukowsky, 2007: cxxvii is curtly dismissive of it.

2 Fraser, 1996: 37.

3 "A romantic narrative of early date": Fraser, 1996 also refers, enticingly but obscurely, to the notion that there may lie beneath Appian a "late Seleucid 'Vulgate'" (38 n.79) or "early Seleucid chroniclers, call the tradition what we will" (39).

AD Greek roots).[4] More to the point, Fraser could easily have gone much further in gathering in possible reverberations of his "Seleucus Romance" in extant texts. I myself have done so. The following texts preserve tales of primary interest for such a "Romance" (many others offer us material of secondary interest):

- Euphorion of Chalcis, F119 Lightfoot (ca. 200 BC)
- Diodorus, 19.55 (ca. 30 BC)
- Justin, 15.3–4, 17.1–2 (4th cent. AD?), after Trogus (ca. 20 BC)
- Plutarch, Demetrius 31–32, 38, 47–52 (ca. AD 100)
- Appian, Syriake 52.260–64.342 (AD 130s–160s)
- Lucian, De dea Syria 17–27 (ca. AD 170s)
- Libanius, Orations 11 (Antiochicus) 76–105 (AD 356)
- John Malalas, Chronicle 197–203 (6th cent. AD), after Pausanias of Antioch FGrH 854 F10 (before AD 358/359?)

I have identified these tales or strings of tales as of interest on the basis that they all meet one (and in all cases it is in fact more than one) of the following criteria. First, they resemble tales found in the Alexander Romance – and the totality of the shared imagery between the *Alexander Romance* and the legendary material bearing on Seleucus is quite astounding: see Appendix 1. Or otherwise they resemble tales identifiable as traditional or as folktale on the basis of other comparanda. Secondly, they incorporate elements of divine intervention, are built around omens, oracles, prophecies or dreams, or they feature love and sex of a pathological or lurid nature. Thirdly, they have an aetiological or a legitimating function for the Seleucid dynasty, its cults or institutions, or they articulate Seleucus' life and deeds in accordance with a sense of destiny. The tales so identified can be grouped as follows:[5]

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[4] For the *The History of Apollonius, King of Tyre* in general see Rohde, 1914: 443–451, Mastrocinque, 1983: 18–22, Kortekaas, 1984, 2004, 2007, Puche López, 1997, Panayotakis, 2012, Sandy at Reardon, 1989: 736–772 (translation only). For discussion of the date, see Puche López, 1997: 13–34, Kortekaas, 2004: 93–96, Panayotakis, 2012: 1–2.

[5] For a more detailed reconstruction of the Seleucus legend, with full scholarly bibliography, see Ogden, 2017, a book to which I consider the arguments laid out here to form an important coda.

1. **Birth myth and omens of greatness.** Apollo sires Seleucus; his talismanic anchor signet ring; his hearth spontaneously blazes; Branchidae addresses Seleucus as "king"; his mastery of an escaped sacrificial bull; his anticipatory donning of Alexander's diadem; Alexander's ghost foretells his kingship; Seleucus trips over a stone anchor, a symbol of security, en route to recover Babylon.
2. **Seleucus' escape from Babylon.** Seleucus flees Antigonus in Babylon on horseback with a golden talisman, thereby destining himself to supplant him.
3. **Omens and myths of city and cult foundation.** Seleucus contrives to found Seleucia-on-the-Tigris at the right astrological point to ensure its greatness, despite the Chaldaeans; he founds the Syrian Tetrapolis (Seleucia-in-Pieria, Antioch, Apamea, Laodicea-by-the-Sea) with the guidance of Zeus eagles, and aligns himself with Zeus, Heracles, Perseus, etc. in their battles against the Orontes, the Dragon-river. Seleucus founds the Daphne shrine where he finds Apollo's golden arrowhead in the ground, and encounters a dragon.[6]
4. **Combabus and Stratonice.** Seleucus' servant Combabus castrates himself in (accurate) anticipation of slander when made chaperone to Seleucus's new wife Stratonice. Seleucus belatedly rewards him for his self-sacrifice.
5. **Antiochus and Stratonice.** Seleucus' son and heir Antiochus falls in love with Seleucus' new wife Stratonice, and pines away in secret almost to the point of death. The doctor Erasistratus diagnoses love, and persuades Seleucus to hand his wife over to his son.
6. **Omens of death, death and revenge.** Branchidae fortells Seleucus' doom upon his return to Europe. Another oracle foretells his death at an Argos; both are fulfilled. Seleucus is assassinated by the wicked Ptolemy Ceraunus, but his ghost harries Ceraunus to his own death in revenge.

Groups 1 (birth myths and omens of greatness) and 3 (omens and myths of city and cult foundation) here are exceptionally rich categories, whilst the

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[6] Subsequently to the publication of Ogden, 2017, there has been news of the discovery (and theft) of a superb Roman mosaic from Apamea showing Seleucus making sacrifice with Antiochus as a Zeus-eagle seizes the bull's head from the altar; the scene is attended by Heracles, Ktisis (Foundation personified) and a further female figure whose name is lost (Tyche? Apamea? Antiocheia?): Olszewski / Saad 2017, with illustration.

tale of Seleucus' son Antiochus falling in love with his new young wife Stratonice was a particularly popular one in antiquity and is extant in quite a number of fully narrated versions.[7]

I do not have the confidence to assert that all these tales derive from a single lost text, a written "Seleucus Romance". But I do point to the high degree of *coherence* between the tales. I make three points here. First, a great many of them do indeed appear side-by-side with each other in the texts of Appian, Libanius and Malalas, with Appian's text in particular representing a striking node for them – in other words, most of the episodes identifiable as legendary align either directly or at any rate thematically with material found in Appian: see Appendix 2. We should not lose sight of the fact that Appian himself does indeed give us what might legitimately be termed a "Seleucus Romance". Secondly, all the tales are enmeshed in a tight web of recurring themes and motifs, amongst which one might point to the following in particular: altar fires, anchors, bulls, Chaldaeans, thunderbolt-bearing Zeus-eagles, ghosts, rings and other circular talismans, dragons, Stratonice's love life, and finally rivers and waters. Thirdly, an important negative consideration: it is a striking fact that there is little contradiction or incompatibility between these tales. These considerations do give me confidence to assert that, whether or not a unitary text lies behind all the tales in question, we are dealing with tightly coherent tradition, in other words, with "a [singular] legend of Seleucus", as opposed to a random series of diverse and independent traditions.

It is immediately apparent when these tales are grouped as above that they build to produce a legendary biography for Seleucus that is quite rounded and complete, covering his birth and his death and his greatest and most enduring achievements in between, together with a look at his love-life. However, one subject, on initial inspection, is conspicuous by its absence, and alarmingly so. Like Alexander before him, Seleucus achieved what he did and was what he was on the basis of *war*. Where is all the war in his legend? Where, above all, is the battle for the recovery of Babylon, the battle of Gaza, the battle of Corupedium,[8] and in particular the battle

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[7] Listed in Appendix 2 below.

[8] In Ogden, 2017, 203–205, 264–266, 331–333 I argue that the distinctive tales about the fate of Lysimachus' body after he was slain at Corupedium actually derive from a tradition that was focused upon Seleucus, with an elaborate comparison being constructed with the fate of Seleucus' own body in turn after his assassination near Lysimachia. See Appian, *Syriake* 62–64, with discussion at Marasco, 1982: 117–140, Brodersen, 1989:

of Ipsus?[9] Could there have been a complete legend of Seleucus without any significant treatment of war? Could it be that war did indeed feature in Seleucus' projection into legend, but that this aspect of the legend (alone?) has not come down to us? Could it be that the treatment of warfare in the context of his legend was merely prosaic, and has not therefore left any identifiable traces in our extant sources?

My best guess is that we have not in fact lost any *significant* treatments of warfare from the legend and that in the matter of warfare, as in others, it broadly resembled the *Alexander Romance*. This is to say that it eschewed the expansive, full-service narratives of pitched battles and sieges so beloved of what one might refer to as the legitimate historiographical sources and instead focused all its attention on Seleucus as an individual and his role within and indeed rather more often *around* the great battles. Before pressing what we can of warrior-Seleucus from our sources for the Seleucus legend, let us briefly review the handling of warfare in the *Alexander Romance* itself, to establish our paradigm.

In this text major campaigns are typically swallowed without elaboration in a sentence or less. The description of the conquest of Media, no less, is a case in point, this being accomplished in the phrases, "From there he took up his army and made a dash for the Median land and great Armenia, and having enslaved these […]".[10] Examples of this sort of thing can easily be multiplied.[11]

The *Alexander Romance* gives us only a single example of what might be called a straight description of a pitched battle, one located by the river Pinarus and so evidently supposed to represent Issus.[12] This is hardly

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178–190, Goukowsky, 2007: xviii, 161–164.

[9] Prosaic accounts of the battle of Ipsus at Diodorus, 20.106.3–5, 113.4, 21.1.1–6, Justin, 15.4.22–23, Plutarch, *Demetrius* 28–30 (fullest), Pausanias, 1.6.7.

[10] *AR*, 2.9. Except where otherwise indicated, "*AR*" refers to the A text (α recension) of the *Alexander Romance*, which seems to have originated in the early third century AD. The text is cited in accordance with Kroll's 1926 edition, which is adopted with slight modifications by Stoneman, 2007.

[11] E.g., the siege of Tyre is accomplished in the brief phrases, "Having slaughtered the defenders, sacked Tyre, and razed it to the ground" (*AR*, 1.35); the conquest of Syria is accomplished in the phrases, "He himself took the army, subjected the whole of Syria and moved on to Asia" (*AR*, 1.39); the conquest of Achaea is accomplished in the phrases, "Alexander himself took the force he had and marched to Achaia. Upon arrival he subjected many cities and mustered an army of 170,000 from the region" (*AR*, 1.42).

[12] *AR* 1.41.

a full-service description: the detail is brief and generic and does not bear comparison with the expansive descriptions of the same and similar battles in the historiographical sources.[13] We are given a few brief words on Darius' battle line (but nothing on Alexander's) and an indication that the initial brunt of the fighting fell to the extremities of the wings. We are then told that the men around Alexander himself pushed against those around Darius, the sky darkened, and the Persians fled in rout.

But the dominant pattern is for battle narratives to focus down strongly on the figure of Alexander himself as an individual and to make the battles more or less one-man affairs. This is achieved either by presenting Alexander as an Achillean figure, who effectively fights the battle or turns it single-handedly, or, more commonly, as an Odyssean one, who wins the battle by devising some clever ruse. In using these terms I am not trying to argue for any specific engagement with Homeric paradigms on the part of the *Alexander Romance*: I merely use them as a convenient way of making a general distinction between varieties of battle narrative with an individual focus.

To look at Alexander in Achillean mode first, we are told how he singlehandedly (save for his two companions Ptolemy and Peucestas) breaks into an unnamed Indian city his army is besieging by going over the wall on a ladder. When he is wounded, this in itself inspires his army without (how do they learn about it?) to fight with renewed vigour, break down the city's gates, rush in and slaughter all.[14] The account of the sack of Thebes begins as if it is to be a full-service battle narrative: we are first told that horsemen rain arrows down on the defenders, whilst others are charged with undermining the walls with a variety of weapons, tools and siege-engines. But it soon mutates into something else as it focuses down on the heroic figure of Alexander himself. Alexander is able to force himself into the burning city first and alone, again, and the defending Thebans that remain within flee before him.[15] The principal function of both these battles is, accordingly, to offer a showcase for an Achillean Alexander.

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[13] Some examples follow. Granicus: Plutarch, *Alexander*, 16.3–11, Arrian, *Anabasis*, 1.14–16. Issus**:** Polybius, 12.17–22 (incorporating Callisthenes, *FGrH* 124 F35), Curtius, 3.8–11, Arrian, *Anabasis*, 2.8–11, Justin, 11.9. Gaugamela/Arbela: Curtius, 4.12–16, Plutarch, *Alexander*, 33.8–11, Arrian, *Anabasis*, 3.11–15. Hydaspes: Curtius, 8.13–14, Arrian, *Anabasis*, 5.9–19, *Metz Epitome*, 53–62.

[14] *AR*, 3.4.

[15] *AR*, 1.46.

We find Odyssean ruses on Alexander's part in his raising of a dust-cloud outside the city-walls of Persia (!) by tying branches to goats' tails, thus giving the enemy the idea that his army is much greater than it is;[16] in his starting of fires in the city of the Bebryces by night in order to recover Candaules' wife;[17] and in his taking of the impregnable Indian city of Aornos by the use of crampons.[18] But we should note that the Odyssean Alexander is often able to avoid battle altogether by use of his persuasive skills. The pattern for this is set whilst Alexander is still a young prince under his father Philip, when he persuades Mothone and a second Greek city into the tribute-paying fold.[19]

The narrative of the campaign against Porus can be seen to begin in Odyssean mode and then to move into Achillean mode. The first part is dominated by Alexander's Odyssean ruse. He secretly infiltrates Porus' city to observe his elephants beforehand and, making use of this knowledge, then designs iron machines to thrust forth heated bronze statues at them as they advance. In the second part, the great battle, said to endure for 25 days, comes to an end when the Achillean Alexander challenges the giant Porus himself to a monomachy, in which he is of course instantly victorious.[20]

But most telling of all is the *Romance*'s narrative of Alexander's decisive battle against the Persians (not relatable to anything historical) outside the walls of the city of Persia.[21] Again the battle description is brief, perfunctory and generic, with the only points of interest being: first, the divine appearance projected by Alexander himself atop Bucephalas; secondly, the Persians' use of scythed chariots, which mow down their own infantry when in rout; and, thirdly, the drowning of the entire Persian host, Darius himself aside, in the river Stranga as they try to cross its initially frozen waters.

It is the last detail that reveals the principal function of the narrative in the *Romance* and shows it to be little more than a coda to the lengthier preceding expanse of narrative that has focused more personally on (an Odyssean) Alexander. In these chapters we have been told how the god Ammon has appeared before Alexander in a dream dressed as Hermes the

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[16] *AR*, 2.13.
[17] *AR*, 3.20.
[18] *AR*, 3.4.
[19] *AR*, 1.23.
[20] *AR*, 3.3–4.
[21] *AR*, 2.16.

messenger and instructed him to infiltrate the city of Persia disguised, in a similar way, as his own messenger, in order to establish with Darius a time for battle. Invited to dine with the Persian aristocrats at the royal table, Alexander begins to tuck the golden goblets into his clothing. We are not told why. When challenged over this he asserts that it is his king Alexander's practice to allow guests at his table to take away their goblets with them, and that he has been assuming that Darius' practice is the same. The Persians allow him to proceed. Later, as Alexander is about to be exposed for who he is when a former Persian ambassador to Macedon recognises him, he sneaks out, kills a guard, steals his horse and rides swiftly away. Darius sends riders in pursuit. But Alexander gets to safety by riding the horse over the frozen Stranga. As the horse's feet touch the far bank, the ice melts behind him, cutting him off from his pursuers and sealing his destiny.[22]

This tale belongs to a productive story-type that flourished in both Macedonian and Persian culture in which (to express it in its most elementary terms), the king-to-be destines himself for power by stealing from the king-of-the-past a golden talisman of his power. As he flees with the token on horseback, the king-of-the-past is given a prophecy that he must arrest the fugitive before he touches or crosses a significant body of water if he is to maintain his kingdom. The king sends his own riders in pursuit, but they fail in their task. The fugitive reaches the water, and in due course returns from it to kill the king-of-the-past and take his kingdom. Two examples will suffice. First, we have Herodotus' famous tale of Perdiccas I of Macedon. In this the young Perdiccas flees Macedon's king-of-the-past having scooped up the sunlight of his house into his robe. The king-of-the-past is advised too late of the significance of what Perdiccas has done, and sends riders to pursue him. But Perdiccas is able to cross a great river (the Haliacmon?) that floods after him and cuts off his pursuers. He returns from beyond the river, from the 'Gardens of Midas', to conquer the land and make himself its king.[23] Secondly, we have the Sasanid story of Ardeshir in the effectively seventh-century AD *Deeds of Ardeshir*. Ardeshir, the king-to-be, is the groom to Ardevan, the king-of-the-past and last of the Parthian kings of Persia. When Ardevan's concubine, who is in love with Ardeshir, overhears the king's astrologers telling him that whichever servant flees from him within the next three days will overthrow him, she steals Ardevan's treasure and goes to Ardeshir, and they duly

[22] *AR*, 2.13–15.

[23] Herodotus, 8.137–138.

escape together on the king's horses. Ardevan sends riders after them, but they cannot catch Ardeshir before his horse puts its feet in the sea, thereby sealing his destiny. Prior to this Ardevan's kingly majesty has already been espied riding pillion with Ardeshir, in the form of a large ram. Ardeshir duly returns to destroy Ardevan and make himself king in his place.[24]

When considered in the context of these analogues, it becomes clear that the tale of Alexander's escape from the city of Persia with Darius' golden goblets is the principal and focal method by which the *Alexander Romance* narrates and (mystically) explains Alexander's overthrow of Darius. The ensuing great battle of the Stranga, its outcome pre-determined, is little more than the dotting of the "i" and the crossing of the "t", with its relevance to the episode of the horseback escape with the talisman underscored by the parallel imagery of the river's melting ice-flows.

The model offered here by the *Alexander Romance* helps us to make sense of the structure and function of the legendary traditions associated with Seleucus too. Diodorus, Appian, Libanius and John Malalas between them allow us to reconstruct a deployment of this same story-type (with some awkwardness) in the legendary projection of Seleucus' life. But once again there is only a vestigial degree of attention, albeit a telling one, to the great battle in which the destiny engaged by the escape with the talisman is realised. In 315 BC, long before any of Alexander's former marshals have become kings themselves, Seleucus is satrap of Babylon, when the more powerful Antigonus arrives in the city with his army and his treasure-laden camel-train to be entertained by Seleucus. Seleucus soon comes to realise that Antigonus is plotting his destruction when he effectively accuses him of embezzlement and so he flees from the city on horseback with a talisman of Antigonus' power, a golden helmet (something from his camels, perhaps). The Chaldaeans of Babylon warn Antigonus that unless he catches Seleucus, he will make himself master of Asia and kill him. Antigonus sends riders after him, but they are unable to catch him before Seleucus arrives in his place of safety by Ptolemy's side (no body of water is explicitly mentioned in the partial accounts of the tale that survive, and we can only speculate about which one might have taken the role in fuller versions of the narrative: cases can be made for the river Euphrates,

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[24] *Deeds of Ardeshir*, §§1–4 Ântiâ /§§1–5 Grenet. Grenet, 2003 (with Pahlavi text) offers a French translation more reliable than the English translation of Ântiâ et al., 1900 and the German translation of Nöldeke, 1878. For the date of the text see Grenet, 2003: 26. 47. For Sasanid minstrelsy see Boyce, 1957 and Yamamoto, 2003.

adjacently to Babylon, the Red Sea, adjacently to Egypt, or even the Mediterranean). Once again, the riders return without their quarry.[25]

Historically speaking, Seleucus had complex dealings with Antigonus before his flight from Babylon and after it, whilst the battle of Ipsus, in which Antigonus died, was itself also a complex affair. But we repeatedly find authors of different kinds making a simplified, indeed simplistic, pleasingly circle-closing link between Antigonus' expulsion of Seleucus from Babylon and his death at Ipsus, and the expansive impact of the story-type is surely a contributing factor to this trend.

First, Appian's own account of Seleucus' flight from Babylon is, significantly, the opening reference to him in a self-contained section of his "Seleucus excursus" in the *Syriake*. The primary focus of this section is Seleucus' relations with Antigonus and it culminates in his defeat of him at Ipsus.[26] So, whilst the key motifs of the tale-type have rather evaporated from Appian's account, his shaping of this section of his Seleucus material, with a beginning at the flight and an end at the final defeat of Antigonus, is indeed suggestive of the fact that the tale-type does nonetheless structure Appian's material here.

Secondly, let us turn to Pausanias' brief reference to the events of Seleucus' flight from and return to Babylon:[27]

> "When Alexander had died, Seleucus took fear upon the arrival of Antigonus in Babylon and fled to Ptolemy the son of Lagus. But he returned again to Babylon and upon his return conquered the army of Antigonus and killed Antigonus himself, and later on he captured Antigonus' son Demetrius when he campaigned against him."

There is nothing here that is formally untrue or unhistorical, but the innocent reading this would imagine that Antigonus, having once ousted Seleucus from Babylon, had taken up permanent residence there, that he was sat there still when Seleucus returned to Babylon and that he was killed by him there: Ipsus and all intervening complications have been elided. Once again, I would suggest, we feel the pressure of the story-type: Seleucus returns to oust the king from the city from which he had fled just as Alexander, Perdiccas and Ardeshir did.

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[25] Diodorus, 19.55–6, Appian, *Syriake*, 53.266–269, Libanius, *Orations*, 11.80–82, John Malalas, *Chronicle*, 202 = Pausanias of Antioch, *FGrH* 854 F10.

[26] Appian, *Syriake*, 53.266–55.279.

[27] Pausanias, 1.16.1.

Thirdly, Libanius:[28]

> "Considering that he had now recovered what belonged to him through these actions [sc. Babylon], but that requital was owed to him for the plot against him, he marched against Antigonus in Phrygia, joined battle with him and killed him in open battle, exacting vengeance for his ambush. The ambush he escaped, as one beloved of the god(s) would do; but the vengeance he exacted, as one drilled in virtue would do."

The link between the expulsion from Babylon and the killing of Antigonus at Ipsus is strikingly made twice over.

And this link is all the more strengthened by the implication Libanius allows us to take that Seleucus actually killed Antigonus himself in one-to-one combat in the battle. And with this we are once again back in the realm of the Achillean Alexander of the *Alexander Romance* and his monomachy-clash with the Indian king Porus.[29] The motif of one-to-one combat between kings or leaders is found elsewhere too in the Seleucus legend, as we shall see.

But Ipsus was also preceded by a more immediate act of predestination. Plutarch has the following tale of the eve of the battle in 301 BC:[30]

> "At this point evil omens enslaved their spirits. For Demetrius saw Alexander in his sleep, dressed in splendid armour and asking him what watchword he was giving for the battle that was about to take place. 'Zeus and Victory', he said. 'Then I'm off,' he said, 'to your opponents, for they are inviting me.'"

In other words, Alexander wanted to hear his own name as the watchword. Given the focus upon Seleucus and Antiochus (and their elephants) in Plutarch's following account of the Battle of Ipsus, it does seem that they are the opponents Plutarch has particularly in view here.[31]

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[28] Libanius, *Orations* 11.83.

[29] Relevant here too is Seleucus' encounter with the other great Indian king, Sandracottus-Chandragupta. Again, according to Appian *Syriake*, 55.282, armies clash before the two men negotiate one-to-one, but this negotiation culminates rather in some sort of agreement of intermarriage.

[30] Plutarch, *Demetrius* 29.

[31] Hadley, 1969: 143–144 (his nos. 8–9) at any rate regards the tale as belonging to Seleucus' tradition. Goukowsky, 1978: i, 128 ponders whether the story was disseminated by the Seleucids or rather by Demetrius in order to excuse his defeat. See also Bearzot, 1983: 7, Mehl, 1986: 110. Antiochus I was also given a dream-visit from the ghost of

The narrative link forged between Seleucus' escape from Babylon and his killing and supplanting of Antigonus largely (Pausanias aside, perhaps) leapfrogs the battle or series of battles in which Seleucus first recovered Babylon for himself in 312–311 BC, of which again we initially seem to hear nothing in the legendary tradition, but I think that we can conjecture that these battles were handled in a similar way in it, namely with a narrative focusing principally upon a symbolic act of predestination followed by a victory by Seleucus in monomachy. As to the predestination, Appian has the following tale to tell of Seleucus as he was setting out with the small expeditionary force Ptolemy had given him to retake Babylon from Antigonus:[32]

> "It is said again that when, later on, he was going off to Babylon, he struck his foot against a stone, and that when the stone was dug up it was seen to be an anchor [προσκόψαι λίθῳ, καὶ τὸν λίθον ἀνασκαφέντα ἄγκυραν ὀφθῆναι]. The prophets were disturbed, for they took this sign to portend delay, but Ptolemy the son of Lagus, who was escorting Seleucus, said that the anchor was a sign of security, not of delay. Because of this, accordingly, when Seleucus became king his seal was an anchor."[33]

The anchor symbolism here of course makes appeal to the anchor symbolism of Seleucus' birth myth: when Apollo sired Seleucus on his mortal mother Laodice he gave her an iron signet ring engraved with an anchor sign; she was to give this to Seleucus when born, and he was destined to be king in the place in which he lost it, which turned out to be Babylon, the foundation-point, indeed, of his empire. He and his descendants also bore the anchor symbol on their thighs. This is just one of the many examples of the recurring themes and motifs in the legend of Seleucus to which I alluded above.[34]

Alexander with a similar watchword theme. Lucian tells us that Alexander came to him to inspire him when the Gauls were threatening his kingdom, and told him to make the watchword for his soldiers "health" (ὑγιαίνειν): Lucian, *Solecist* 9; cf. Wörrle, 1975: i, 65–66, Goukowsky, 1978: i, 128.

[32] Appian, *Syriake* 56.286–287.

[33] Discussion of this episode at Wirgin, 1961, Marasco, 1982: 77-79, Bearzot, 1983: 11, Brodersen, 1989: 137–138 and Goukowsky, 2007: 150–151 nn. 690–692.

[34] Justin, 15.4.2–9, Appian, *Syriake*, 56.284–285; cf. Euphorion, F119 Lightfoot = Tertullian, *De anima* 46.6 p.63.25 Waszink.

Appian's tale contrasts with one told of Antigonus in turn on the eve of the battle of Ipsus in 301 BC, which was to be his downfall:[35]

> "And as his phalanx was already being drawn up, Antigonus stumbled upon coming out and fell completely flat on his face. He was in a bad way. He returned to his feet, stretched his hands up to heaven and asked the gods for either victory or a painless death before defeat."

Given that Seleucus was Antigonus' principal opponent at Ipsus, that his victory was another momentous occasion for him and his empire, delivering to him, *inter alia*, the lands of the future Syrian Tetrapolis, and given that he was ultimately the only one to be in a position to enjoy the fruits of the victory, it is possible that this story too originated within the Seleucus tradition, where it formed a significant diptych with the anchor-stone story, Seleucus' good stumble as he prepared for battle with Antigonus (or rather his minions) contrasting with Antigonus' bad stumble as he prepared for battle with Seleucus.

As to the monomachy, Appian proceeds to tell how Seleucus slays Nicator, whom Antigonus had left as satrap of Media, by his own hand in battle.[36] This Nicator is a fiction, designed to serve (current purposes aside) as an aetiology for Seleucus' surname, as Appian himself more or less acknowledges elsewhere,[37] and inspired no doubt by Seleucus' historical (but non-fatal) clashes rather with Nicanor, satrap of Media and Persia.[38]

To conclude. We can after all recover the traces of warfare-episodes in the legend of Seleucus, so long as we understand what sort of thing it is that we need to look for. The ever-important parallel of the *Alexander Romance* warns us that we should not be looking for grand and expansive narrations of pitched battles, but rather for narratives with a strong focus on the hero-king himself, either as an Odyssean deviser of battle-ruses or as an Achillean lone-champion fighting before his army. We should

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[35] Plutarch, *Demetrius*, 29.

[36] Appian, *Syriake* 55.278.

[37] Appian, *Syriake* 57.293

[38] Diodorus, 19.92, 19.100. On this Nicanor, see Grainger, 1990: 96–98 and Cohen, 2006: 163 n.6 (both with clear expositions of the historical problems surrounding the figure). It is possible that this Nicanor (whom according to Diodorus survived his clash with Seleucus) went on to become the Nicanor that founded Dura-Europus. Porphyry works the opposite way to Appian, rendering Seleucus' epithet in the form "Nicanor": *FGrH* 260 FF2, 32.

also look for the outcome of battles to be determined by mystical acts of predestination rather than by blood, sweat and toil, fully described. According to these criteria, we can indeed adumbrate treatments of the battle for the recovery of Babylon and the battle of Ipsus in the legend of Seleucus. And this is very reassuring, for it is treatment of these battles above all that we would have hoped to find on the basis of the achievements of the historical Seleucus. And in particular this conclusion helps to strengthen the supposition that the bulk of the legend of Seleucus in the round does indeed survive to us, in trace form at least, in the sundry texts upon which we depend for it.

The contentions advanced here offer a partial answer, so far as the Seleucus tradition is concerned, to a question either implicitly suggested or explicitly posed by a number of the other papers in this volume: How does one pull a shaped, coherent, meaningful and relatable narrative out of the infinite chaos of war?

Appendix 1. Thematic Correspondences Between the *Alexander Romance* and the Legend of Seleucus

AR	***Alexander Romance* episode**	**Legend of Seleucus episode**
1.6	Philip's wife Olympias experiences illicit passion for Nectanebo.	Seleucus' wife Stratonice experiences illicit passion for Combabus: Lucian, *De dea Syria* 17–27.
1.8	Alexander is sired by the god Ammon. Philip dreams of Ammon sleeping with Olympias to impregnate her, and then of himself sealing her womb with a signet ring.	Seleucus is sired by the god Apollo. Laodice dreams of Apollo impregnating her and giving her a signet ring, which she then finds upon waking: Justin, 15.4.1–9, Appian, *Syriake* 56.
1.11	Oracle of egg and serpent, anticipating both Alexander's world-encompassing greatness and his death as he attempts to return to where he came from.	Oracle of Didyma, anticipating Seleucus' greatness in Asia and death as he attempts to return to Europe: Appian, *Syriake* 56.
1.12	Nectanebo astrologically manipulates Olympias' parturition to ensure that Alexander is born at the hour of destined greatness.	The Chaldaeans of Babylon attempt (but fail) to manipulate astrologically the time at which Seleucia-on-the-Tigris is founded to ensure that it misses the hour of destined greatness: Appian, *Syriake* 58.

1.13–17	Alexander alone masters and tames the bull-headed stallion Bucephalas.	Seleucus single-handedly subdues the bull that escapes from Alexander's sacrifice: Appian, *Syriake* 57, *Suda*, s.v. Σέλευκος. Also within the Seleucus tradition, Sandracottus tames a massive wild elephant that then becomes his personal war-elephant: Justin, 15.4.10–25.
1.24	Philip's wife Olympias the target of Pausanias' illicit passion.	Seleucus' wife Stratonice the target of Antiochus' illicit passion: Appian, *Syriake* 59, Plutarch, *Demetrius* 38, etc.
1.24	Philip's treacherous assassination by Pausanias. Cf. also Darius' treacherous assassination by Bessus (2.20) and Alexander's by Iollas (3.17, 31).	Seleucus' treacherous assassination by Ptolemy Ceraunus: Appian, *Syriake* 62–63; Eusebius, *Chronicle* Arm. g344 = p. 117 Karst = Porphyry, *FGrH* 260 F32.2–4.
1.24	The dying Philip avenges himself by knifing his own assassin Pausanias.	Seleucus' ghost avenges him by harrying his assassin Ceraunus to his death: Plutarch, *Moralia* (*The Late Vengeance of the Gods*) 555b, Proclus, *De decem dubitationibus circa providentiam* 57.30–3 Boese.
1.30	Ammon addresses Alexander as king and tells him that he is his father.	Apollo (Seleucus' father) at Didyma addresses Seleucus as king: Diodorus, 19.90.
1.31	Alexander founds Paratonium at the site where an arrow, misfired at a deer, lands.	Seleucus founds the shrine of Daphne, during a hunt, at the site where he finds a golden arrow-head in the ground: Libanius, *Orations* 11.95–98.
1.31-2	Alexander builds Alexandria beside the Nile branches Drakon and Agathodaimon (name of dragon deity); a dragon (*drakōn*) appears and disrupts the early construction and a heroon is built for it.	Seleucus founds Antioch beside the river Orontes, formerly known as the Drakon: John Malalas, *Chronicle* 198, 200. A dragon (*drakōn*) appears at the site at which Seleucus will found Apollo's Daphne shrine: Libanius, *Orations* 11.98.
1.31	Alexander populates Alexandria with the local peoples.	Seleucus populates Antioch with local settlers from Crete and Cyprus: Malalas *Chronicle* 202.
1.32	Alexander marks out the circuit of Alexandria with grain.	Seleucus marks out the circuit of Antioch with grain, and elephants for the towers: Libanius, *Orations* 11.90. He marks out the circuits for Laodicea and Apamea with animal blood: John Malalas, *Chronicle* 203.

1.33	An eagle carries meat from Alexander's sacrifice to deposit it at the site of the shrine of Sarapis that Alexander is to refound. It is tracked by horseback scouts.	An eagle carries flaming ox-thighs from Seleucus' sacrifice to deposit them at the site of the city of Antioch Seleucus is to found. It is tracked by Antiochus on horseback: Libanius, *Orations* 11.86–8, John Malalas, *Chronicle* 199–200, 202. There are many similar stories relating to Seleucus' other foundations of Seleucia-in-Pieria, Laodicea and Apamea.

2.4	Anachronistic incorporation of Lysias and Plato into the debate in Athens.	Anachronistic incorporation of Erasistratus into tale of Antiochus and Stratonice: Valerius Maximus, 5.7 ext.1, Plutarch, *Demetrius* 38, Appian, *Syriake* 59–62, Lucian, *De dea Syria* 17–27, *Icaromenippus* 15, Julian, *Misopogon* 17 (347–8), *Suda*, s.v. Ἐρασίστρατος.
2.8	Antipater's failed attempt to suborn the doctor Philip into killing Alexander.	Lysimachus' failed attempt to suborn Seleucus into killing Demetrius: Diodorus, 21.20; Pausanias, 10.19.7; Orosius, 3.23.64.
[β 2.13][39]	[Ruse of manufacturing pretend army by attaching torches to sheep horns by night; cf. also β 2.23, the same with goat horns.]	[Ruse of manufacturing pretend army by lighting fires in mountain passes by night: Plutarch *Demetrius* 49, Polyaenus 4.9.5 (cf. also 4.9.2).]
2.13–16	Alexander flees Persia in horseback pursuit to destine himself to return to capture it.	Seleucus flees Babylon in horseback pursuit to destine himself to return to (re-)capture it: Diodorus, 19.55; Appian, *Syriake* 63, Pausanias, 1.16.1–3; cf. Libanius, *Orations* 11.82, John Malalas, *Chronicle* 202.
2.20	Darius' ostentatious betrothal of Roxane to Alexander.	Seleucus' ostentatious betrothal of Stratonice to Antiochus: Appian, *Syriake* 61; Plutarch, *Demetrius* 38.

[39] The β recension (5th cent. AD?) of the *Alexander Romance* is cited in accordance with the text of Bergson 1965.

3.4	Alexander calls a halt to a battle with the Indians and then undertakes one-to-one combat with their king Porus, killing him by his own hand.	Seleucus calls a halt to a battle with the Indians and then undertakes one-to-one negotiation with Indian king Sandracottus, making a marriage alliance: Appian, *Syriake* 55. Seleucus kills Nicator by his own hand: Appian, *Syriake* 55; he perhaps too kills Antigonus by his own hand: Libanius, *Orations* 11.83.
3.19	Alexander inadvertently destines Ptolemy for kingship by placing his diadem upon his head.	Seleucus inadvertently destines himself for kingship by placing Alexander's diadem upon his own head: Arrian, *Anabasis* 7.22, Appian, *Syriake* 56–57. Also in the Seleucus tradition, Alexander inadvertently destines Lysimachus for kingship by placing his diadem on his head: Appian, *Syriake* 64, Justin, 15.3.13–14.
3.19–23	Alexander disguises himself as his subordinate Antigonus.	Seleucus disguises himself as his *hoplophoros* (arms-bearer) Amactyon: Polyaenus, 4.9.6.
3.30	Magi and Chaldaeans are belatedly made to confess the meaning of Alexander's death omen.	Magi of Babylon (i.e. Chaldaeans) are belatedly made to confess the time of great destiny for Seleucia-on-the-Tigris: Appian, *Syriake* 58.
3.33	Alexander's will.	Alexander bequeaths the Persian empire wholly to Seleucus: Ammianus Marcellinus, 14.8.5, 23.6.8.
3.33	Seleucus is Alexander's *hoplophoros* (arms-bearer).	Seleucus disguises himself as his own *hoplophoros* Amactyon: Polyaenus, 4.9.6.
3.33	Alexander dies peacefully abed in Babylon.	Seleucus dies peacefully abed in Seleucia-on-the-Tigris, Babylonia: Ptolemy Chennus, *Strange History* 5 (*apud* Photius, *Bibliotheca* cod. 190, 151a), Lucian, *De dea Syria* 18.
3.34	Respectful burial of the dead Alexander by Ptolemy. Cf. also 1.14 (respectful burial of Nectanebo), 1.24 (of Philip), 2.21 (of Darius), 3.4 (of Porus).	Respectful burial of the dead Seleucus by Philetaerus and Antiochus: Appian, *Syriake* 63. Of the dead Lysimachus by his (dog and) son Alexander: Appian, *Syriake* 64.
3.35	List of cities founded by Alexander.	Lists (and discussions of) the cities founded by Seleucus: Strabo, C749–751, Appian, *Syriake* 57, Libanius, *Orations* 11.100–104, John Malalas, *Chronicle* 199–204.

Appendix 2. Appian's Seleucus Excursus as a Node for the Legendary Tradition

Appian *Syriake*	Episode links
53.266–269 (Seleucus' horseback escape from Babylon).	Diodorus, 19.55–56 (Seleucus' horseback escape from Babylon, fuller version); Libanius, *Orations* 11.80–82 (Demetrius advises Seleucus to flee); John Malalas, *Chronicle* 202 = Pausanias of Antioch, *FGrH* 854 F10.7 (the horse and the golden helmet).
56.283 (the Europe-Asia oracle from Branchidae).	Diodorus, 19.90 (Branchidae hails Seleucus as king); Libanius, *Orations* 11.94–100 (Branchidae promises Seleucus a great destiny and instructs him to found Daphne, which he duly does).
56.284 (spontaneous fire on ancestral hearth).	Pausanias, 1.16.1 (spontaneous fire on sacrificial altar).
56.284–287 (brief birth myth and tale of the anchor-stone).	Euphorion, F119 Lightfoot = Tertullian, *De anima* 46.6 p.63.25 Waszink (Laodice's intimation); Justin, 15.4.2–9 (full version of birth myth).
56.287–57.292 (the diadem tale).	Arrian, *Anabasis* 7.22 (the diadem tale).
57.294 (Seleucus overpowers the sacrificial bull).	*Suda*, s.v. Σέλευκος ('and this is the origin of his horns').
58.299 (Seleucus led to the site of Seleucia-in-Pieria by a thunderbolt).	Strabo, C750–751 (Zeus' thunderbolts against Typhon, the dragon river); Libanius, *Orations* 11.85–93 (Zeus-eagle and the foundation of Antioch), 94–100 (Seleucus' foundation of Daphne after the appearance of the dragon); John Malalas, *Chronicle* 37–8 = Pausanias of Antioch, *FGrH* 854 F9 (Perseus' celestial fire against the dragon river); John Malalas, *Chronicle* 198–203 Dindorf = Pausanias of Antioch, *FGrH* 854 F10.1–11(Zeus-eagles and the foundations of the four cities of the Tetrapolis)
58.299–308 (Seleucus' foundation of Seleucia-on-the-Tigris).	Pliny, *Natural History* 6.122 (the city's walls trace the outline of an eagle).
59.308–61.327 (Antiochus and Stratonice).	Valerius Maximus, 5.7 ext.1, Pliny, *Natural History* 7.123, Plutarch, *Demetrius* 38, Rufus of Ephesus, pp.607–608 Daremberg-Ruelle, Lucian, *De dea Syria* 17–18 (etc.), Galen, *On Prognosis*/ *De Praecognitione* 6 = *CMG* V 8.1, pp. 100–105 (ed. Nutton), *Commentary on Hippocrates'* Prognosticus / *In Hippocratis* Prognosticum 1 =

59.308–61.327 (Antiochus and Stratonice).	*CMG* V 9.2, pp. 206–207 and 218–219 (ed. Heeg), Julian, *Misopogon* 17 = 347a–348a, *The History of Apollonius, King of Tyre* 1–6 (etc.) (Antiochus and Stratonice); Lucian, *De dea Syria* 19–27, *De imaginibus* (*Essays on Portaiture Defended*) 5 (Combabus and Stratonice).
62.329–63.336 (omens of Seleucus' death and his assassination by Ptolemy Ceraunus).	Memnon, *FGrH* 434 F8 (Seleucus' assassination by Ptolemy Ceraunus); Pausanias, 1.16.2–3 (Seleucus' assassination by Ptolemy Ceraunus); Plutarch, *Moralia* (*The Late Vengeance of the Gods*) 555b–c (revenge of Seleucus' ghost); Proclus, *De decem dubitationibus circa providentiam* 57.30–3 Boese (revenge of Seleucus' ghost).

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Liberation Propaganda as a Legitimizing Principle in Warfare: Dionysius I as an Antecedent to Philip and Alexander of Macedon

Frances Pownall

An autocratic ruler on the fringes of the Greek world poised to embark upon an ambitious empire-building war to the east wields an effective propaganda campaign designed to legitimize his campaign in the eyes of his fractious Greek subjects by adopting the self-proclaimed role of a liberating avenger against a foreign foe.[1] One might naturally assume that this is a description of Philip II of Macedon or his son Alexander. This description could, however, equally well apply to Dionysius I of Syracuse, who justified his acquisition of a large overseas empire by positioning himself as the defender of the Greeks both in Sicily and abroad against the Carthaginians, who served as the archetypal barbarians for the western Greeks, in much the same way as the Persians did for the Greeks of the mainland. As I shall demonstrate, Dionysius' justification of his own imperialism through panhellenic rhetoric and liberation propaganda served as an important, but generally not acknowledged, model for the legitimation strategies adopted by both Philip and Alexander.

Although the term itself is notoriously both a loaded and a slippery one, it is generally agreed that the notion of panhellenism very early on became used as a tool of imperialist propaganda employed by both individual city-states, particularly Athens and Sparta, to justify their own territorial aspirations by playing up the fear of the barbarian Other and portraying themselves as liberators protecting the freedom of their fellow

[1] I thank the organizers of Melammu 10 for the kind invitation to such a stimulating symposium, and Sabine Müller, the session chair, and the audience for their helpful feedback and comments. This research was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Greeks and avenging Xerxes' destruction of the Greek sanctuaries.[2] Both Philip and Alexander consciously adopted the Greeks' own panhellenic rhetoric, particularly the theme of revenge,[3] as what Giuseppe Squillace has termed a "consensus strategy" designed to get the Greek cities on board in the campaign against Persia,[4] for which the choice of Corinth as the meeting place for the Greeks to sign a peace agreement and ratify Philip as their *hegemon* was particularly evocative in terms of Greek freedom and the memory of the Persian Wars. It is by now impossible to deny the importance of the influence of the Achaemenids upon Philip II and (especially) Alexander, particularly in terms of their incorporation of carefully selected elements of Persian royal ideology and court ceremonial, as has been widely demonstrated in recent scholarship.[5] But while both Philip and Alexander certainly turned to panhellenic rhetoric as well as the effective use of liberation propaganda employed by the Persian kings themselves (ironically) as justification for their own extensive territorial acquisition,[6] the empire-building efforts of Dionysius I of Syracuse offered a more recent example of the twin themes of the freedom of the Greeks and revenge against the barbarian successfully used on a grand scale as

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2 Mitchell, 2007 (with earlier bibliography); see also Green, 1996; Flower, 2000b; Hall, 2002: 205–228.

3 War as revenge: Diod. 16.89.2, 17.72.3 (with 17.72.6); Just. *Epit*. 11.5.6; Arr. *Anab*. 2.14.4 and 3.18.12; war as liberation: Diod. 16.91.2; Diod. 17.24.1–2; Theopomp. *FGrH* 115 F 253; revenge theme as propaganda: Pol. 3.6.13; Cic. *Rep*. 3.15. Seibert (1998) downplays the role of the vengeance theme in Philip and Alexander's invasion of Asia, but see now Flower, 2000a; Bloedow, 2003; Antela-Bernárdez, 2016: 236–246; Rung, 2016.

4 Squillace, 2010: 76–80; see also Squillace, 2004: 95–138. Cf. Faraguna, 2003; Poddighe, 2010.

5 See, e.g., Kienast, 1973; Bosworth, 1980a; Fredericksmeyer, 2000; Brosius, 2003; Lane Fox, 2007; Spawforth, 2007; Weber, 2009; Briant, 2010: 101–138 (cf. Briant, 2002: 875–76); Coppola, 2010; Olbrycht, 2010: 355–368; Müller, 2014: 224–242. There remains, however, no consensus as to the degree or extent of Achaemenid influence on either Philip or Alexander.

6 On the importance of the "liberation" propaganda adopted by Cyrus to secure the allegiance of local elites in his conquest of the Ancient Near East, see esp. Briant 2002: 31–49. The themes of divinely-empowered restoration of order and protection of the subjects from enemies recur in the ideology of subsequent Achaemenid kings; see, e.g., Kuhrt 1995: 676–682; Wiesehöfer, 2001: 29–33; Llewellyn-Jones 2013: 19–30; Root 2013 (who emphasizes the deliberate ambiguity of the nature of Achaemenid kingship and the assimilation of the ideologies of previous Near Eastern empires).

a rallying cry. Michael Flower has suggested that Alexander continued to use panhellenic rhetoric after the burning of Persepolis precisely because it "was especially well suited to the concerns and aspirations of the western Greeks",[7] who were his targets-to-be in his intended follow-up campaign to the west. As I shall argue, however, Dionysius' influence on Philip and Alexander was not limited to the demands and requirements of one particular forthcoming campaign that was never realized, but instead was far more profound and pervasive than has generally been recognized.[8]

From the very beginning of his rule, Dionysius I employed panhellenic rhetoric and liberation propaganda to legitimize his seizure of power in Syracuse. Diodorus gives a lengthy and detailed account of how Dionysius parlayed the general atmosphere of fear engendered by the Carthaginian siege, destruction, and sacking of the western Sicilian city of Acragas (and its sanctuaries)[9] in 406 into a threat of the imminent destruction of the whole of Sicily, thereby justifying his seizure of sole power from the current elected generals.[10] Dionysius' claims that his war against the Carthaginians was on behalf of the freedom of the Sicilian Greeks rather than to further his own ambition are shown to be just as specious as those of Philip and Alexander by his openly tyrannical actions shortly thereafter.

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7 Flower, 2000a: 135.

8 Sordi (1983) and Sanders (1990–1991: 124–134; 1991: 283–285) do concede some possibility of Sicilian influence upon Philip and Alexander in limited ways: certain aspects of political and cultural policy (Sanders, 1990–1991), the establishment of the ruler cult (Sanders, 1991), and as the inspiration for Alexander's attempt to impose *proskynesis* upon the Greek and Macedonian members of his court (Sordi). Cf. Sanders, 1991: 284: "Turning finally to Alexander … the Sicilian connection, if accepted at all, has to be allotted a somewhat peripheral and indeed subordinate rôle in the proceedings". Furthermore, the efforts which have traditionally been understood as attempts at divine honours for all three rulers are better explained as part of their royal self-fashioning and court ceremonial, a sphere in which Dionysius does seem to have been particularly influential upon Philip and Alexander, as I have argued in a separate study (Pownall, 2017a); cf. Sekunda, 2009 and Duncan, 2012.

9 The emphasis in Diodorus' narrative on the Carthaginian pillaging and ransacking of the sanctuaries of Acragas (Diod. 13.90.2–3 and 13.96.5 (cf. his vivid destruction of their destruction of the temples at Selinus) probably ultimately derives from Dionysius himself, for his source is Philistus of Syracuse (13.91.4; cf. 13.103.4; cf. Sanders, 1987; 110–157). On Philistus' generally positive treatment of Dionysius, see below n. 14.

10 Diod. 13.91–96. On these events, see Caven, 1990: 47–58. On the freedom of the Greeks as a legitimizing principle for successive generations of tyrants in Sicily, see Prag, 2010.

He recalled all the exiles, claimed that his enemies were plotting against him in order to persuade the populace to grant him a private army,[11] hired mercenaries, put to death his political opponents and confiscated their property, and (in a device later employed by Octavian with similarly positive effect) solidified his power by volunteering to resign his office as general. As Diodorus says (13.96.4), possibly with a modicum of hyperbole, "He seems to have single-handedly gained possession of the greatest and most long-lasting tyranny of any of those recorded."

After Dionysius made peace with the Carthaginians in the aftermath of his first campaign against them, he began to extend his military control not only over the Greek cities along the coast, but also over the indigenous settlements in the interior of the island.[12] As Diodorus tells us (14.7.5), he justified his territorial expansion against the Sicels by invoking their alliance with the Carthaginians: "When it seemed to him that he had secured his tyranny well, he led out his forces against the Sicels, eager to get under his power all the independent peoples, and especially these people because they had previously allied with the Carthaginians".[13] Furthermore, as we learn from the Sicilian historian Philistus, who was closely associated with Dionysius and seems to have circulated Dionysian propaganda,[14] Dionysius denied the autochthony of both the Sicels (*FGrH* 556 F 46) and the Sicans (*FGrH* 556 F 45), claiming that they were immigrants from elsewhere. On the one hand, this allegation provides a ground of

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[11] This is a stereotypically tyrannical deceit, made famous in the tradition on Peisistratus (Hdt. 1.59.4–6), to which Diodorus (or his source) draws our attention by commenting that people said that Dionysius engaged in this ploy in imitation of Peisistratus (Diod. 13.95.5–6).

[12] On Dionysius' successful military career and extensive territorial expansion, see Caven 1990 and Roisman 2017: 227–273.

[13] Ἐπεὶ δὲ τὰ κατὰ τὴν τυραννίδα καλῶς ἐδόκει διῳκηκέναι, τὴν δύναμιν ἐξήγαγεν ἐπὶ τοὺς Σικελούς, πάντας μὲν σπεύδων τοὺς αὐτονόμους ὑφ᾽ ἑαυτὸν ποιήσασθαι, μάλιστα δὲ τούτους διὰ τὸ συμμαχῆσαι πρότερον Καρχηδονίοις.

[14] On Philistus as a mouthpiece for Dionysian propaganda, see Sordi, 1990; Vanotti, 1994; Bearzot, 2002: esp. 114–119; Pownall, 2017b. Although Philistus is generally favourable towards Dionysius, however, there are indications that his portrayal of the tyrant was not uniformly positive; see Sanders, 1987: 43–71 and Pownall, 2013: Biographical Essay. Philistus' motives for his positive portrayal of Dionysius are not motivated by any sincere approval of tyranny as a political system, as the (generally hostile) ancient sources allege, but rather by the desire to regain the favour of Dionysius I (by whom he had been exiled) and to maintain his position at the court of Dionysius II; see Pownall, 2017b.

justification to Dionysius' expansion in that he was not removing these populations from their ancestral homes but merely occupying land that they themselves had seized from others. Even more significantly, however, Philistus claims that the Sicans were originally Iberians (i.e., allies of the Carthaginians), which suggests that Dionysius desired to connect them to the Carthaginians and thereby legitimize his campaign against them.[15] Similarly, Philistus attributes Ligurian ethnicity to the Sicels; because the Ligurians dwelt in what later became Etruscan territory, this claim appears to reflect propaganda intended to justify Dionysius' campaigns in Italy against the Etruscans, who enjoyed friendly relations with the Carthaginians.[16] In any case, it is evident that the tyrant was willing to rewrite the early history of the island in order to justify both his domestic and foreign campaigns as protection and revenge against foreign threats. Nor, despite all of this panhellenic rhetoric, is there any evidence that Dionysius actually treated the Greek and the non-Greek populations of the island differently in any concrete way,[17] just as was to be the case for Alexander with the Greek cities in Asia Minor, as Ernst Badian with characteristic pointed emphasis demonstrated a half century ago.[18]

Dionysius' self-proclaimed role as guardian of Greek freedom against the barbarian Carthaginian menace proved useful to him not only in the consolidation of his control of both the Greek and the non-Greek populations of the island, but also in his ambitious territorial aspirations abroad. He justified the extension of his military campaigns to Italy by simultaneously playing on the Sicilian fear of the Carthaginians,[19] and emphasizing his role as self-proclaimed liberator of the Greek cities.[20]

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15 Pownall, 2013: Commentary to F 45 and Pownall, 2017b: 69.

16 Pownall, 2013: Commentary to F 46 (with earlier bibliography) and Pownall, 2017b: 69.

17 On the complex relations of Dionysius with the non-Greek populations of Sicily, see Occhipinti, 2006.

18 Badian, 1966.

19 Diod. 14.44.3: "When he was on the point of arousing a great war, he made polite overtures to the cities throughout the island, eliciting their good will. Seeing that the people of Rhegium and Messene who dwelt on the strait had a strong force already mobilized, he expressed concern that these people would ally themselves with the Carthaginians when they crossed over to Sicily."

20 Diod. 14.45.4 (to the Syracusan Assembly): "At the same time there was the argument that it would be a terrible thing to allow the Greek cities to continue to be enslaved by barbarians, and these cities would join in the risks even more, insomuch as they desired to obtain their freedom" (ἅμα δὲ συνίστα δεινὸν εἶναι περιορᾶν τὰς Ἑλληνίδας πόλεις

When Dionysius ventured farther afield and began to plant settlements overseas along the Adriatic and Tyrrhenian coasts, he legitimized this territorial expansion by claiming that he was making the route safe for Greek ships (Diod. 15.13.1). Similarly, he claimed that the object of the expedition was the suppression of piracy (Diod. 15.14.3):

> "Dionysius, in need of funds, went on campaign against Tyrrhenia with 60 triremes, alleging as a pretext the prevention of piracy (πρόφασιν μὲν φέρων τὴν τῶν λῃστῶν κατάλυσιν), but in reality in order to plunder a holy sanctuary, full of numerous dedications, which was located in the port of the Tyrrhenian city of Argylle; the port is called Pyrgi."

Although Diodorus is clearly using a hostile source who attributes Dionysius' campaigns against the Etruscans to his desire to plunder their sanctuaries, he concedes just after this passage (15.14.4) that the reason that he was raising large amounts of money at this time was in preparation for the resumption of an extensive campaign against the Carthaginians. Furthermore, it is important to observe in connection with Dionysius' attempts to acquire an overseas empire that his campaigns were mainly against the Etruscans, who were allies of the Carthaginians. The discovery of gold tablets at the Etruscan port of Pyrgi (that is, the city mentioned in the passage above) inscribed in both Etruscan and Phoenician attests to considerable Carthaginian influence there and, as David Lewis has remarked, adds another dimension to Dionysius' attack on the city.[21] The friendly relations between the Carthaginians and the Etruscans allowed Dionysius to portray his rapid acquisition of an overseas empire as a legitimate campaign that was part of his overall platform to protect Sicily from the Carthaginians and to exact revenge against both the barbarians and their allies for past wrongs.

It is therefore not surprising that when Dionysius did achieve military success against the Carthaginians, he was quick to emphasize the righteousness of his campaign against them by attributing their defeat and destruction to the impiety they had committed in plundering Greek temples,[22] in language very similar to that later used by both Philip and Alexander. Furthermore, while it is difficult to piece together a complete

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ὑπὸ βαρβάρων καταδεδουλωμένας, ἃς ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον συνεπιλήψεσθσι τῶν κινδύνων, ἐφ' ὅσον τῆς ἐλευθερίας τυχεῖν ἐπιθυμοῦσιν).

[21] Lewis, 1994: 148.

[22] Diod. 14.63.1–2; 14.70.4–71; 14.73.5; 14.76.

picture of Dionysius' portrayal of himself as an avenger enjoying divine support for his liberation of Sicily from the Carthaginians because most of our extant sources are hostile and are intent on depicting him as an impious tyrant,[23] we can catch a glimpse of his original liberation propaganda by reading between the lines.

One important example of Dionysius' invoking of divine support to legitimize his expansionist campaigns as the saviour of Greek Sicily against the barbarian Carthaginians is the mysterious prophetic dream of the woman of Himera. The earliest definite reference to it occurs in the second oration of Aeschines of 343, when he summarizes some of Demosthenes' arguments in his prosecution speech (Aeschin. *Leg*. 10):

> "And he attempted to compare me to the tyrant Dionysius of Sicily, and with a great deal of frenzied shouting he urged you to be on your guard against me, and he narrated the dream of the priestess in Sicily (τὸ τῆς ἱερείας ἐνύπνιον τῆς ἐν Σικελίᾳ διηγήσατο)."[24]

A scholiast to the speech provides a more detailed rendition of the dream, citing Timaeus (*FGrH* 566 F 29) as his authority. In this version, the dream is attributed to a woman of Himera (τινα τὸ γένος ῾Ιμεραίαν) rather than a priestess, and the dream figure of Dionysius is explicitly identified as a destructive scourge of Sicily and Italy, who would destroy the lands if he was released (ἀλάστωρ ἐστὶ τῆς Σικελίας καὶ ᾽Ιταλίας, καὶ ἐάνπερ ἀφεθῇι, τὰς χώρας διαφθερεῖ). Furthermore, the connection between Dionysius and tyranny is made explicit, for the woman encounters the corporeal Dionysius shortly afterwards accompanied by his spear-bearers (a bodyguard is the stereotypical accompaniment of a tyrant) and recognizes him as the figure she had seen in her dream, to her ultimate detriment, for once Dionysius learned of her prophetic dream he did away with her in secret (the swift dispatching of any real or perceived political opposition is another stereotypical action of a tyrant).[25]

A third rendition of the dream, containing a few crucial differences, can be found in Valerius Maximus (1.7.*ext*. 6). This version of the anecdote is clearly still a hostile one, portraying the dream Dionysius as the "dreadful

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[23] For a comprehensive overview of the hostile tradition on Dionysius, see Sanders, 1987.

[24] There is no reference either to Dionysius or to the dream of the priestess in Sicily in Demosthenes' prosecution speech (*Or*. 19); evidently, he removed this section prior to his circulation of the speech.

[25] Cf. the famous advice of Thrasybulus of Miletus to Periander (Hdt. 5.92ζ).

fate of Italy and Sicily who would be the ruin of many cities" (*Siciliae atque Italiae dirum esse fatum ... multis urbibus exitio futurum*). Once again, Dionysius' tyrannical behavior is made explicit, for the woman's circulation of her dream as a negative omen leads to her elimination by Dionysius. Furthermore, in this version the anonymous woman is identified as being of elite status (*Himerae quaedam non obscuri generis femina*), that is, from the tyrant's natural political opposition, and the Syracusan elite did in fact mount the most effective challenge to Dionysius' autocratic rule.[26] The timing of the dream, however, is transposed to *before* Dionysius' accession, and the moment of recognition of Dionysius as the "fate" of Sicily and Italy occurs at the very moment of his triumphal entry into Himera. As Marta Sordi recognized,[27] these differences imply that underlying the later negative version of the story, circulated by sources hostile to Dionysius,[28] lay a positive one, almost certainly originating in Dionyius' own liberation propaganda.

Dionysius' emphasis on his divinely-supported role as protector of the western Greeks from the Carthaginians suggests that he did indeed have himself portrayed as the ἀλάστωρ of Sicily and Italy, for the word is ambiguous and can mean the instrument as well as the recipient of divine vengeance. What is more, Himera itself occupies a particularly evocative place in the historical memory of the Sicilian Greeks. The city was the site of Gelon's defeat of the Carthaginians in 480, a victory over the barbarians which Gelon seems to have emphasized in a similar way in his own liberation propaganda legitimizing his rule over Sicily.[29] A contingent of Himerans joined Dionysius' campaigns against the Carthaginians in the early 390s (Diod. 13.79.8), at which point he could reasonably claim to have liberated the city from barbarian control, reminding the Sicilian Greeks that he, and not Gelon, was the true defender of Greek freedom

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[26] Cf. De Angelis, 2016: 212–213. It is also worth noting that Theodorus, whose long invective against Dionysius is given in direct speech by Diodorus (14.65–69), is introduced as a member of the Syracusan elite (Diod. 14,64.5); on the function of this speech in Diodorus' narrative, see Baron, forthcoming.

[27] Sordi, 1984; cf. Schepens, 1994: 270; Lewis, 2000: 100–101; Prag, 2010: 63.

[28] Although Timaeus circulated the anti-Dionysius version of the dream omen as part of his invective against the tyrant (see esp. Vattuone, 1981), it did not originate with him but with Heraclides Ponticus (Tert. *De Anim*. 46.6); Champion, 2010: Commentary to F 29 and Baron, 2013, 127–129.

[29] On Gelon, see Luraghi, 1994: 273–373.

against the barbarians.[30] Zeus Eleutherius is a deity particularly associated with Himera (Pind. *Ol*. 12.8), conveniently allowing Dionysius to portray his own control of the city in terms of liberation from the Carthaginians, and himself as the divinely-appointed avenger of Sicily and Italy.[31] Attributing the prophetic dream to a priestess (presumably of Zeus Eleutherius) would serve further to legitimize both the omen and Dionysius' own role as an avenging spirit against the Carthaginians.

Furthermore, Dionysius is attested elsewhere to have used prophetic omens to legitimize his rule. Immediately after his narrative of the woman of Himera, Valerius Maximus recounts another prophetic dream (1.7.*ext*.7), also recorded by Cicero (*Div*. 1.39) on the authority of Philistus (*FGrH* 556 F 57a), in which Dionysius' mother dreamed that she would give birth to a baby satyr. Portents of this sort foreshadowing the coming of a future hero are a very common motif in the biographical tradition on great leaders. Once again on the authority of Philistus (*FGrH* 556 F 58), who as we have seen was generally more than willing to propagate Dionysian propaganda, Cicero (*Div*. 1.73) narrates a second portent of Dionysius' future greatness, according to which shortly before Dionysius' seizure of power his horse, which had become submerged in a river, was miraculously restored to him with a swarm of bees settled on its mane.[32] As Sian Lewis has observed, bees are commonly associated with archaic tyrants,[33] and Dionysius therefore sought to legitimate his rule by tapping into an existing repertoire of archetypal symbols conferring upon him divine right to rule.[34]

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[30] On Dionysius' minimizing of Gelon's victory at Himera, see Pownall, 2017b: 73–75. Cf. the words attributed by Diodorus (14.66.1) to Theodorus (cf. n. 26 above): "Of course no one could possibly think it appropriate to compare Dionysius with Gelon of old. For Gelon, through his own virtue, together with the Syracusans and the rest of the Greeks of Sicily, set free all of Sicily, whereas Dionysius, who took over the cities which were free, has put all of them under the control of the enemy and has himself enslaved the fatherland." As Prag (2010: 60) observes, "the negative surely implies the existence of the positive."

[31] Cf. Sordi, 1984: 536.

[32] The anecdote appears also in Pliny (*HN* 8.158) and Aelian (*VH* 12.46).

[33] Most obviously in the name of Melissa ("bee"), the wife of Periander (Hdt. 3.50.1 and 5.92η), who serves as the archetypal tyrant in Herodotus; see also Pownall, 2017b: 67–68.

[34] Lewis, 2000. On the association of bees with the divine in Greek myth and legend, see Davies / Kathirithamby, 1986: esp. 64–72.

Dionysius not only borrowed from his predecessors, however, but consciously distinguished himself from them, just as he attempted to wrest from Gelon the role of saviour of Sicily from the barbarian Carthaginians. The portent of the satyr-child is unique to Dionysius and also offers us an important window into his manipulation of his royal image. Satyrs are associated with Dionysus, for whom the mythical creatures serve as constant companions in literature and art, and even symbolize the god's association with drama, most obviously perhaps at the City Dionysia in Athens where each trilogy of tragedies was accompanied by a satyr play. This association with Dionysus was undoubtedly a crucial aspect of Dionysius' self-fashioning, and not just a play on the happy coincidence of the similarity of their names. Dionysius is attested to have had himself portrayed as his namesake on a statue erected in Syracuse, if we can believe the testimony of Dio Chrysostom (*Or*. 37.2).[35] Not coincidentally, Dionysius himself entertained considerable dramatic and literary ambitions of his own, and the extant fragments from his tragedies suggest that he presented himself as a wise and just ruler in the tradition of the idealized monarch in fifth-century Attic drama.[36] While the use of tragedy and performance culture as legitimation was prefigured by the Deinomenid tyrants in the fifth century,[37] by adopting the attributes of Dionysus and turning himself into the living embodiment of the god of the theater Dionysius went far beyond the aspirations of his predecessors.

It is time now to return to the question of possible influence on Philip and Alexander. While Dionysius may appear an obvious model in terms of the justification of his own imperialism through panhellenic rhetoric, the adopting of an avenging role against a foreign foe, his use of prophetic omens to underscore the claim to divine support of his rule, and his incorporation of divine attributes (especially Dionysus) as part of his self-fashioning, is there any evidence that he did actually serve as an inspiration to the Argead monarchs? One possible connection between Dionysius of Syracuse and Alexander presents itself in the recurrence of the unusual portent of a satyr, which makes a timely appearance also in the Alexander legend. According to Plutarch (*Alex*. 24.5), in the course of his lengthy siege of Tyre Alexander had a dream in which a satyr mocked him from a distance, but

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[35] *Pace* Sanders, 1991: 280–283, the existence of such a statue does not imply the establishment of a ruler cult to Dionysius I.

[36] So Duncan, 2012.

[37] Kowalzig, 2008; Morgan, 2015: esp. 87–133.

eventually after much coaxing and chasing, permitted itself to be caught. The soothsayers duly interpreted this dream as foretelling the surrender of Tyre to Alexander based on the etymology of the word satyr, that is, "Tyre will be yours" (Σὴ γενήσεται Τύρος).[38] In his treatise on the interpretation of dreams (4.24), Artemidorus gives another version of this anecdote in which the satyr dances on Alexander's shield. It is surely no coincidence that a portent of a satyr reappears in connection with Alexander's lengthy siege of Tyre, which he eventually succeeded in capturing by building a causeway to connect the island city with the mainland.[39] Some sixty-five years prior to Alexander's capture of Tyre, Dionysius owed his success in the siege of the Carthaginian city of Motye in western Sicily, located (like Tyre) on an island off the coast, to his own revolutionary construction of a causeway (Diod. 14.48.3). It does not seem much of a stretch to view Dionysius' achievement as an inspiration for Alexander in his siege of Tyre.[40] Furthermore, Dionysius' legacy to Alexander went beyond the purely military sphere. Alexander, like Dionysius, was concerned from the very beginning of his campaign to surround himself with an aura of almost supernatural invincibility and divine support, and was apparently not averse to borrowing the portent of the satyr right out of Dionysius' playbook as part of the massaging of his own image.

Furthermore, in the Tyre campaign Alexander may have engaged in some one-upmanship of his own *vis-à-vis* Dionysius. In his account of Dionysius' failed campaign to prevent the Carthaginians from seizing and plundering the city of Gela in 405, Diodorus (13.108.4) tells us in passing that the Carthaginians seized a colossal bronze statue of Apollo as spoils and sent it off to Tyre. He then cites Timaeus (*FGrH* 566 F 106) as his source for Alexander's "liberation" of this very statue from Tyre on the same day and at the same hour as it had originally been seized

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[38] There was another tradition associated with Alexander's capture of Tyre according to which he dreamed that his ancestor Heracles was guiding him into the city; Arr. *Anab*. 2.18.1; Plut. *Alex*. 24.5; Curt. 4.2.17; this particular omen is connected to the Tyrians' refusal to allow Alexander to sacrifice to the Tyrian Heracles (i.e., Melqart); Arr. *Anab*. 2.15.7; Diod. 14.40.2–3; Plut. *Alex*. 24.5; Curt. 4.2.2–3; Just. *Epit*. 11.10.10–11; *Itin*. 42. Both these omens likely arise out of contemporary propaganda; cf. Bosworth, 1980b: 239. That is not to say, however, that the Alexander historians did not themselves manipulate these omens for their own narrative purposes; cf. Bowden, 2017.

[39] Arr. *Anab*.2.18.2–4; Diod. 17.40.4–5; Plut. *Alex*. 24.5; Curt. 4.2.16; *Itin*. 42.

[40] Cf. Bosworth, 1980b: 240, who comments only upon the military technology and does not mention the portent of the satyr.

from Gela. Leaving aside the suspiciously neat synchronism, which seems to belong to Timaeus,[41] the meat of the anecdote is likely to have come from Alexander's own effective propaganda machine, in which he explicitly links his own actions at Tyre against the impious Phoenicians as Persian subjects with Dionysius' campaigns in Sicily against the impious Phoenician Carthaginians, carefully portraying himself as more successful than his predecessor in the west.[42]

Alexander's interest in Dionysius is also attested in a tradition found in Plutarch (*Alex*. 8.3) that when he was on campaign in Asia, the books that he requested from Harpalus, to supplement his famous copy of the *Iliad*,[43] were the Sicilian history of Philistus (the only historian of the group), which contained a panegyric account of the reign of Dionysius I from an insider's perspective, a selection of the works of the three great Attic tragedians, and the dithyrambic poems of Telestes and Philoxenus. It is not surprising that Alexander would have requested a copy of the historical work detailing Dionysius' creation and administration of the greatest empire of the Greek world of his time. Works of the Attic tragedians, of course, were regularly performed not only at the Dionysia in Athens but also at the Macedonian court, where Euripides enjoyed a special prominence, and is attested to have composed tragedies with specifically Macedonian settings in honour of his Macedonian patrons.[44] It is worth noting as well that Aeschylus at least is attested to have spent time in Sicily, at the invitation of Hieron of Syracuse.[45] The only other authors that Alexander requested are dithryambic poets, who composed hymns in honour of

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[41] On Timaeus' fondness for synchronisms, see Pearson, 1987: 157–158; Asheri, 1991/1992; Schepens, 1994: 271–272 and 275–276; Baron, 2013: 110–111 and 132. See also Feeney, 2007: 47–52, who observes that Timaeus' use of such synchronisms is part of his overall mission to make Sicily and Western Greece into an equal partner with mainland Greece.

[42] Alexander seems to have circulated as part of the cluster of omens foretelling his capture of Tyre a vision that allegedly appeared to a Tyrian citizen of Apollo deserting the city, to which the people of Tyre responded by attempting to tie down the colossal statue of the god; Diod. 17.41.7–8; Plut. *Alex*. 24.3–4; Curt. 4.3.21–22.

[43] It has recently been demonstrated that the tradition in Plutarch on Alexander's sleeping with his copy of the *Iliad* under his pillow reflects a previously unrecognized aspect of his adoption of Persian court ceremonial; see Brunelle, 2017.

[44] On Euripides' connections with the Macedonian court, see Moloney, 2014: 234–240; Müller, 2016: 97–100 and 173–175; Pownall, forthcoming (all with earlier bibliography).

[45] On Aeschylus' Sicilian connections, see, e.g., Bosher, 2012; Morgan, 2015: esp. 96–105.

Dionysus (a god who had a special relevance to the courts of both Dionysius and the Argead monarchs), both with connections to Sicily. Little is known about the life of Telestes (apart from his Sicilian origin), but Philoxenus is attested to have spent considerable time at the court of Dionysius I, although ultimately he (like Philistus) fell from the tyrant's grace,[46] giving rise to an extensive anecdotal tradition.[47] The emphasis in the volumes requested by Alexander on Sicily, Dionyius I, his divine namesake, and performative culture suggests that the young conqueror was not interested only in his Syracusan predecessor's acquisition and administration of a large overseas empire,[48] but his self-fashioning as a ruler as well.

As for Philip, there is some evidence in the anecdotal tradition that he too took a particular interest in Dionysius and his successful construction of an empire. In the first, preserved by Plutarch (*Tim*. 15.7), Philip asks Dionysius II in a symposiastic context how his father had any spare time in which to compose lyric poetry and tragedy, to which the pithy response was that he did so while the other rulers, sarcastically expressed as "you and I and all those who are considered fortunate" (σὺ κἀγὼ καὶ πάντες οἱ μακάριοι δοκοῦντες εἶναι) were engaged in drinking. Similarly, Aelian (*VH* 12.60) records a conversation between the two during which Philip asked Dionysius II how he had acquired such a powerful empire from his father but had not managed to preserve it (to which he responded that his father had left him everything except good fortune). Leaving aside the rhetorical and moralizing tropes imbued in these anecdotes, it was considered at least plausible to the later tradition that Philip and Dionysius II met at Corinth, where the latter withdrew in exile following his defeat by Timoleon,[49] and engaged in conversation on the secret of the elder Dionysius' political and military success. At the very least, these anecdotes suggest that Philip, who successfully manipulated Greek popular opinion by portraying himself as the avenger of gods against sacrilegious offenders

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[46] Possibly another reason why Alexander requested these particular works was precisely to examine intellectual resistance to various aspects of Dionysius' rule, as suggested by Sekunda, 2009: 185

[47] On Philoxenus' sojourn at Dionysius' court, see Sanders, 1987: 15–21; Hordern, 1999; Duncan, 2012: 138–141; Fongoni, 2014: 15–18.

[48] That is, as more than just a source of facts about the west in terms of a putative future expedition, as suggested by, e.g., Brown, 1967.

[49] On Dionysius II's defeat by Timoleon and final exile, see Muccioli, 1999: 424–446.

first in his intervention in the so-called Third Sacred War,[50] but on an even larger scale in his portrayal of his campaign against Persia as a holy war of retribution,[51] took an interest in precisely how Dionysius justified his control not only over the Greek cities, but also the extension of his power overseas.

As the only real predecessor in the Greek world to Philip and Alexander as the ruler of a large multi-ethnic empire, Dionysius offered an obvious blueprint on how to acquire power and expand it overseas by using the theme of Greek freedom as a rallying cry. Although he was certainly not the first to do so, he skillfully tapped into the archetypes of traditional myth employed by the tyrants of Archaic Greece as well as his Deinomenid predecessors, but consciously went beyond them to present himself as an über-liberator. Furthermore, Dionysius flirted with newer models of both monarchy and royal self-fashioning that were to prove highly influential not only upon Philip and Alexander, but on the Hellenistic Successors as well.

So why is it then that the influence of Dionysius (which, as I have suggested, was both extensive and pervasive) upon both Philip and Alexander has traditionally failed to receive full recognition? I would argue that this is partly due to the marginalization of the history of Sicily and the Greek west, and the dismissal of its historiographical tradition as "local" as opposed to the mainstream histories of Greek and (eventually) Rome by both ancient and modern scholarship.[52] Another reason is the issue of the sources which are either late (Diodorus and Plutarch), and may therefore shape their narrative according to their own aims and perspectives, or fragmentary (Philistus, Timaeus, and the contemporary Alexander historians). But, as we have seen, much of the narrative of Diodorus can be traced back to contemporary sources for both Dionysius (Philistus for the positive aspects and Timaeus for the negative ones) and Alexander, and while Diodorus himself was clearly interested in the propaganda strategies of both rulers, he did not invent them. As for Plutarch, he subscribes to the by-then standard apologetic tradition that Alexander gave little attention to his ruling ideology until he became "corrupted" after his conquest of Persia, a position which effectively strips from either Philip or Dionysius any credit as a model for Alexander. Finally, Dionysius' negative image in

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[50] Pownall, 1998; Squillace, 2010: 69–75.

[51] See n. 3 above.

[52] Cf. Dench, 2003.

antiquity as a stereotypical tyrant, not least due to the effective character assassination wielded by Plato and the Academy as well as Timaeus, has resulted his removal from consideration by both ancient and modern sources as a possible influence on the Argead monarchs. It is time to look west, as well as east, as a source of effective strategies for both Philip and Alexander on how to acquire and maintain a large and heterogeneous empire.

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Introduction: "War and Ritual"

Rocío Da Riva

Ritual is a universal element in human society; from social and political events on the macro-scale to personal daily actions, ritual practices, both sacred and secular, can be found in the cultures of the past and present.[1] Every human action is embedded in ritual, and war is no exception. However, in spite of their pervasiveness in human life and culture, rituals are not necessarily easy to delineate and understand. Approaches to ritual range from the broad definitions of cultural anthropologists and psychoanalytic theorists which use the term to label sets of culturally defined or symbolic behaviours, to the more specific definitions that link ritual with the sacred sphere. In the three papers presented here, the term ritual is understood mostly (but not exclusively) in its traditional definition, as something deeply connected with religion.[2] This more restricted definition is not without complications; to quote Evan Zuesse:

> "Although it would seem to be a simple matter to define *ritual,* few terms in the study of religion have been explained and applied in more confusing ways."[3]

Dealing with the subject of the Babylonian New Year Festival, the religious studies scholar Catherine Bell expresses the problem thus:

> "Certainly, the history of interpretations of the Akītu festival demonstrates that definitions of ritual are also historical creations, and such historically determined definitions may or may not adequately describe what the annual festivities of ancient Mesopotamia and Babylon were all about."[4]

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[1] The author would like to acknowledge the support of the ICREA Academia Research Prize (2015–2019) and of the R+D Research Project of the Spanish Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness, financed by the European Regional Development Fund (FFI2016-74827-P AEI/FEDER, UE).

[2] See Belliger / Krieger, 2013; Grimes, 2014.

[3] Zuesse, 2005: 7833.

[4] Bell, 1997: 20.

In another study, Bell summarized the problem as follows:

> "The term *ritual* remains difficult to define, which is hardly surprising, since central activities and concepts are always the ones probed most restlessly. The difficulties attending the definition of *ritual* testify to the fundamental role it is given in religion and social life, as well as to its attractiveness as a focus for current theorizing about religion in general. The definitional difficulties may also suggest the variety of input into the discussion."[5]

According to the contemporary ritual theorist Jan Snoek, "[d]efining the term 'ritual' is a notoriously problematic task. The number of definitions proposed is endless, and no one seems to like the definitions proposed by anyone else."[6] Snoek himself has helped scholars to obtain a useful definition of "ritual" by providing a taxonomy of 24 characteristics that one might find in most (but alas not all!) rituals.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica Online defines ritual as follows:

> "Ritual, the performance of ceremonial acts prescribed by tradition or by sacerdotal decree. Ritual is a specific, observable mode of behaviour exhibited by all known societies. It is thus possible to view ritual as a way of defining or describing humans."[7]

A broad definition of ritual (in its explicitly religious sense) would include any activity with an established sequence of events or development carried out in a specific place and in the context of a particular occasion. Ritual involves all kinds of formal elements of the sacred act: the handling of clothing and objects, bearing, gesture, movements, actions, singing, music, the recitation of prayers, and so on. A ritual is both action and words, and this dual aspect is reflected in the terminology, which contains both the phrasing and the activity: the things that are said and the things that are done in the course of a ritual.

The difficulties in dealing with the topic of ritual are compounded by the problems inherent in the definition of war. The Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, offers the following definition:

> "War, in the popular sense, a conflict among political groups involving hostilities of considerable duration and magnitude. In the usage of social

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5 Bell, 2005: 7848.

6 Snoek, 2008: 3.

7 https://www.britannica.com/topic/ritual (last accessed February 2020).

> science, certain qualifications are added. Sociologists usually apply the term to such conflicts only if they are initiated and conducted in accordance with socially recognized forms. They treat war as an institution recognized in custom or in law. Military writers usually confine the term to hostilities in which the contending groups are sufficiently equal in power to render the outcome uncertain for a time. Armed conflicts of powerful states with isolated and powerless peoples are usually called pacifications, military expeditions, or explorations; with small states, they are called interventions or reprisals; and with internal groups, rebellions or insurrections. Such incidents, if the resistance is sufficiently strong or protracted, may achieve a magnitude that entitles them to the name 'war.'"[8]

Martin Lang, the author of the first contribution, begins his piece by noting the complexity of the connection between the terms ritual and war. A good point of departure would be the seminal work of Catherine Bell, who in one of her books[9] deals with the particular issue of power and authority in relation to ritual. The three papers of this panel specifically have to do with rituals connected with power and institutionalized violence.

Warfare and ritual were deeply entangled in the ancient world, as the gods had to be consulted to justify war and propitiated in order to secure a successful outcome. War in Antiquity originated from divine command and conflict was considered as a divine test; the gods took part in the battle and the outcome was ultimately a divine decision. As summarized by Levtow:

> "The prosecution of war in the Ancient Near East may be described as the orchestration of strategic violence in ritualized social environments. Warfare was in this respect not dissimilar to sacrificial temple cult, as a special theatre of operations in which prescribed patterns of practice were performed by controlled social hierarchies and understood to determine the form and fate of societies. As in sacrificial temple cult, ritual roles were assigned across multiple arenas of Ancient Near Eastern warfare."[10]

Extreme violence has a predominant role in most cosmogonies and foundational myths of the ancient world.[11] In the Babylonian version of the *Enūma Eliš*, the Mesopotamian poem of the creation, the god Marduk

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8 https://www.britannica.com/topic/war (last accessed February 2020).

9 Bell, 1992.

10 Levtow, 2014: 39–40.

11 Taggar-Cohen, 2005; Noegel, 2007.

creates the cosmos from the dismembered body of Tiamat. Afterwards, Marduk proclaims his sovereignty and sets up his throne over her corpse, thus overcoming chaos and establishing his dominion over the world. The *Enūma Eliš* had an extraordinary political significance in I millennium BCE Babylonia: the whole text was read annually on the occasion of the Akītu, the New Year Festival which functioned as a pivotal element of royal legitimacy and, at the same time, confirmed the predominant role played by the capital city Babylon.[12] Thus, religion and ritual served to regulate and sanction the role of the monarch as victorious hero and universal ruler.

A second aspect linking war and religion is ritual violence, so frequent in the texts and iconographic representations of the ancient world (Collins, 2014). We could evoke, for instance, descriptions of ritualized combats and of ordeals or single combats as a way to seek divine sanction. Among the examples of ritual violence are the autumn festival in the Hittite world (described in KUB XVII 35 III, 9–15) or the famous Neo-Assyrian lion hunt, represented in the beautiful reliefs in the palace of Assurbanipal (669–627 BCE) at Nineveh.[13]

Finally, deities and rituals had a predominant role before, during and after the fight itself. Before the battle there was divine consultation, oracles, military vows, recitation of prayers and incantations, exorcism, witchcraft, and so on;[14] during the battle, apart from the divine participation in the campaign, there were hymns and songs to be recited, like the marching paeans, and purifications; afterwards, we find rites and ceremonies referring to the dedication of the spoils to the gods, the sacrifice of prisoners, the profanation of the cadavers of the defeated enemies, dedications of armour, the burial of the war dead including funeral orations (*agon epitaphios* and *logos epitaphios*), and so on. All these elements can be traced both in the written documentation and in the archaeological and iconographical sources, and are extraordinarily well surveyed in the three papers presented in this panel.

Despite the richness of the evidence of war and ritual in the ancient world, one thing that immediately strikes the reader when approaching this topic from the perspective of Ancient Near Eastern cultures is the scarcity of theoretical studies on the problem of ritual in general

[12] Zgoll, 2006.

[13] Watanabe, 1998.

[14] Schwemer, 2007.

and of ritual connected with war in particular. There are indeed many works on war and cult and on rituals of war in the Ancient Near East, especially in the Hittite and Syro-Levantine worlds, and there are numerous editions of ritual texts, incantations to be uttered in the event of war , descriptions of battles, magic used in warlike contexts, the use of battle standards representing the gods, and so on. One should also mention the studies of war and religion in different periods: Pongratz-Leisten, 1995 for Assyria; Guichard, 1999 for Mari; and MacGinnis and Wunsch, 2012 for the Neo-Babylonian period, to mention only a few [further bibliography can be found in Lang's contribution]. However, theoretical approaches to war and rituals are less abundant, and editions and studies of rituals and ritual texts seldom draw on the theoretical frameworks established by sociologists, anthropologists and religious studies scholars. Assyriologists and scholars of the Ancient Near East in general tend to be more reticent than their colleagues from other closely related disciplines about developing and using such philosophical edifices. In this context, Assyriology and Ancient Near Eastern Archaeology lag far behind Biblical (Sa-Moon Kang; Noegel; Kelle et al.) or Classical studies (see below). There are, of course, exceptions such as Bahrani, 2008, in which iconographic representations of state violence in the Ancient Near East are analysed drawing on the modern philosophical arguments of Foucault, Derrida, and Agamben. Comparative studies of rituals of war, considering Mesopotamian and Biblical textual material and making use of frameworks taken from ritual theorists seem to be more abundant; among them we could mention the studies of Scott Noegel, who has often dealt with the question of divinely sanctioned violence in the Ancient Near Eastern world from a broad geographical perspective. Studies on warfare and religion and rituals of war in Greek and Roman cultures based on rigorous theoretical edifices are much more abundant, and one could mention the influential works of Tompkins for Greece and Rich for Rome. For the Greek context one should also consider Connor, Hanson and the seminal work of Pritchett, while for the Roman world we have the outstanding work of Rüpke.[15]

The aim of *Panel 3* of the *10th Melammu Symposium: Societies at War* is to present the problem from a comparative viewpoint, analysing the documentary material and attempting to identify significant parallels

[15] I am indebted to Kai Trampedach for information on these and other titles.

between the Ancient Near East and the Classical worlds. The three speakers analyse the connections between warfare and religion and the use of religion as a justification of war from a variety of perspectives.

Martin Lang ("War and Ritual in Mesopotamia and the Old Testament") offers a comparative perspective on the topic drawing on cuneiform and biblical texts. The author analyses the sources and materials for the rituals, such as preparatory procedures, the ritual purification of weapons and army, sacrifices, and so on. He also considers the rituals performed in the course of the campaign and the ceremonies which took place after the battle. His interesting conclusion is that while rituals play a significant role in the preparation and in the aftermath of the battle, the fight itself is a "ritualless" chaos about which the sources provide little information; so even if (following Noegel, 2007, 15), one might see warfare as a ritual to restore the cosmic order, this restoration can only take place through chaos.

From the classical sphere, the first paper ("The Use of Divination in Ancient Greek Warfare"), authored by Kai Trampedach, one of the co-organizers of this panel, offers a very interesting examination of the role of divination in warfare – particularly (but not exclusively) of the literary use of divination. Divination is used to ascertain and understand the manifestations of the sacred in different spheres of life, warfare and the military among them. Trampedach begins with a definition of the term "divination" and its role in military contexts, and then proceeds to analyse the types of divination we can find in literary sources on ancient Greek warfare: spontaneous or provoked (through ritual, interpretation or extispicy). He shows how through divination Greeks made sense of the past and the present and organized and explained events. The role of divination in decision-making in the course of the war is also examined. The study ends with an assessment of the relation between mantic understanding and strategic rationality.

The phenomenon of divination is known all over the world[16], and in the Ancient Near East it played a crucial role in the religious and social spheres, as demonstrated by the thousands of cuneiform tablets on this issue.[17] From the evidence of the available documentation we find different kinds of divination, and in Mesopotamia, as in the classical world, all

[16] See Nissinen, 2010.

[17] Lambert, 2007; see also the introduction to Lang's paper.

kinds of methods can be found in association with warfare.[18] Questions related to military campaigns and preparations for war were often settled by divination: the moment to initiate hostilities, the amount of forces needed, military tactics, the itinerary, and so on.[19]

To complete this extraordinarily rich picture of war and ritual, Wolfgang Havener ("*Tropaion*. The Battlefield Trophy in Ancient Greece and Rome") addresses the crucial issue of war trophies from a comparative perspective (Greece and Rome) and from the point of view of ritual theories, providing an extremely thought-provoking and nuanced image of the *tropaion*. Havener demonstrates that the *tropaion* had not only a religious component but a political and social one as well; it became a crucial element in the negotiation of the war and in the collective memory associated with past armed conflicts in Greece. According to his interpretation, the rituals related to the *tropaion* are dynamic, and in turn they also modify the landscape in which the *tropaia* were erected and their related ceremonies were held. Finally, he offers a very useful comparison with the Roman material, demonstrating the use of *tropaia* as a universal symbol of victory and the modification of their use and significance in the course of historical and political developments: from the "war of monuments" between Marius and Sulla, through the use made by Pompey of the trophy as a "marker" of territorial dominion, and ending with the "appropriation" of the symbol by the *princeps* Augustus with the acknowledgement of the Senate and People of Rome.

In the Ancient Near East, triumphal monuments are known from all periods and cultures.[20] They are commonly associated with imperial expansion, and their creation was closely connected with military activity.[21] These monuments symbolize the ritualization of warfare in two ways: on one level, as they were located in newly conquered territories, they are iconographic representations of hegemony and military power; on another level, they were "ritually engaged in strategic social settings"[22]. Through their texts and images these monuments ritualize war and its outcome; implanted in the conquered land, they legitimate, project and perpetuate the conqueror's politically sanctioned vision of the world "as it should

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[18] Annus, 2010.

[19] See Starr, 1990.

[20] Harmanşah, 2015: 83–119; Harmanşah, forthcoming.

[21] Da Riva, 2015.

[22] Levtow, 2014: 27.

be", extending the visual presence of the victor and at the same time imposing a vision of the vanquished regions and peoples as conquered, subservient and meek.

To conclude, I would like to say that exploring the full complexity of the ritual dimension of ancient warfare would be a lengthy task and it is not the aim of this panel to present a comprehensive survey of the question. Within the confines of the Melammu Project, this chance to approach the phenomenon from a comparative perspective can help us to reach a much clearer understanding of the fascinating yet elusive topic of ritualized violence and war-related rituals in the Ancient World.

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War and Ritual in Mesopotamia and the Old Testament

Martin Lang

Introduction[1]

In the 7th century BCE Assurbanipal, the King of Assyria, "ruler of the whole world", had a huge collection of inscribed clay tablets gathered in order to found a library. He also asked for tablets of various rituals and incantations that were powerful enough to maintain his royal power but also for "rare tablets […] that are not in Assyria" (CT 22,1)[2]. He had them searched in the sanctuaries of Babylonia. Adressed to his scholarly agents who *nolens volens* had to execute his command and "not to hold back one of the tablets", he also explicitly mentioned tablets of two series of rituals called ÉŠ.GAR MÈ (*iškar taḫāzi*) – "The series: Battle" and *ina* MÈ GI *ana* LÚ NU TE.GÁ (*ina taḫāzi qanû ana amēli lā teḫê*)[3] – "(For) in the battle the reed (of the arrow) might not approach the man" (lines 18 and 21) among other ritual texts *ša ana šarrūti ṭâbi* –" that are good for kingship" (line 25).

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1 Although there are countless publications of the topics of "war" and "ritual" from different perspectives, not too much explicit treatments have been written about the connection of "war *and* ritual". Cp. e.g. now basically Melville 2016; Capomacchia / Rivaroli, 2014; Bahrani, 2008; Mayer, 2001, Elat, 1982, and the respective contributions in the collected volumes Lenzi / Stökl, 2014, Spalinger / Armstrong, 2013, and Kelle / Ritchel Ames / Wright, 2013.

2 Recently: Frame / George, 2005: 280–281; Lieberman, 1990: 333–336; Fincke, 2007: 57.

3 This incantion is also listed in the famous "diviner's manual" (KAR 44 and duplicates, line 23), which, according to the most recent editor, Mark Geller was a list of incantation rubrics (Geller, 2000: 226).

Religion and its rituals are probably connected to warfare in all imaginable religions, and until modern times in Europe religious rituals and warfare have inseparably been interconnected. There were Christian rites in connection with arms and armed persons, in the Middle ages, e.g. the accolade of a chevalier as a liturgical act within the mass. We have prayers for a *benedictio armorum* from the Thirty Year's War. Such prayers were, although officially not intended and not incorporated in official prayer books, still performed in WWI and II. The medieval *benedictio gladii* was part of the Pontificale Romanum till the 2nd Vaticanum. From there on, it is dismissed.[4]

What is a ritual in the context of war?

Ritual

Generally – and even this could be discussed in the vast and heterogeneous field of ritual studies – rituals configure societies (and, of course, they shape and consign the role and the state of individuals in their respective societies). As such, they can be conceived as a special modality of human behaviour, a genre,[5] and within that, as complexes of invariant and repeatable symbolic actions and performative speech acts at certain times and delimited spaces. They are forms of symbolic communication with and within a symbolic world. These actions should (re-)generate and preserve human communities or accompany and protect persons in specific situations or to convey them into another status. The quest for ritual is a complex one, and it appears, as often, as a matter of definition. Very recently Saul Olyan, a scholar of the Hebrew Bible, identified actions after the battle, like blinding, mutilation, circumcision of defeated foes as "circumstantially dependent rites".[6] These actions are, in my opinion, not rituals in a strict sense, rather, they are symbolic actions of punishment with a public and a political dimension.[7] They make a reality visible, but they do not create a new reality, as rituals do.

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4 Cp. Heinz, 1990 and Kranemann, 2004.

5 Sørensen, 2005.

6 Olyan, 2014. We could add the purposeful and systematic destruction of monuments and think about the iconoclasm exerted on the reliefs in the Nineveh palace by the Medes the Elamites (cp. Maul, 2006).

7 Similar: Jean, 2013: 108.

Further, inasmuch rituals are means of symbolic communication in a symbolic world, they can engage ritual agents who are not present in a physical sense. We can think about agency of superhuman agents, i.e. gods, or dead people, who are not able to speak and to act anymore, or even entities with a non-human agency. Ritual agents do not necessarily have to be persons, they also can be things.[8] As we will see later on, arrows, for example, can gain ritual agency.

Last, but not least, rituals can have a long history, very often they seem to be unchangeable, (but in fact, the can change and develop), they are not occasional, they are planned and designed.

War and Ritual

At least since Jane Goodall's scientific observations of warlike actions among and between chimpanzee communities[9] we know that warlike conflicts can take place in the animal world. Basically, warlike actions in antiquity[10] were very often seasonal[11] and, even regular and periodically carried out actions, bound to weather, climate, traffic conditions, and, of course, the engagement of the male population in agricultural work. Seasonality, regularity and extension of warfare must have been reflected – at least for ancient Rome – in the feast calendar and its ritual cycle.[12]

The question, what war is, and, how ritual and war are connected together, is by far more complex. A fortiori, the definition of the concepts of "war" and "ritual" depends on the respective scholars who are dealing about. So we have to ask: Is war an armed enforcement of a (collective) claim, or: is an armed aggression by a group without the resistance of the group attacked a war?[13] Is it a duel between states or groups, or a mere end of a period of peace delimited by a formal declaration of war and a peace agreement finishing these actions? Therefore, war is a *normative*

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8 Brosius / Michaels / Schrode, 2013: 14.

9 Goodall, 1986.

10 For the very early accounts on war and its theological and ritual implications in Ancient Sumer see Espak, 2011.

11 According to the OT (2 Sam 11:1; 1 Kg 20:22) the war season began after the sowing in September / October and ended up in early summertime (Mai/June) (Obermayer, 2011).

12 Rüpke, 1990: 22–23.

13 According to Zainab Bahrani war is "organized and sanctioned violence, appropriated or channelled by the urbanized city state, limited in time and place […]" (Bahrani, 2008).

construction and its content depends on the perspective of the respective beholder.[14] The lion's share of studies about war *and* ritual stems from anthropologists, who deal with the peculiar behaviour of certain tribes in situations of combat and war. They all get their data via field studies and observation. It would be possible to mitigate our situation by only and exclusively looking at the texts, and of course, if given, on the iconographical and / or archaeological remains we have. What do we have? At first, there are narrative references in a couple of pieces of Ancient Near Eastern literature, the Hebrew Bible included; and some mentions of ritual texts in letters and other texts in the shape of lists and some remnants of these ritual texts or ritual tablets themselves.

Pragmatically read, our respective passages all show the *goal* of ritual acting in the context of war: It is the *success* of the armed struggle in favour of the ritual client, it is the victorious end of the campaign. The German assyriologist Daniel Schwemer, in his recent work on some relevant ritual tablets describes this as essential: "While careful military planning certainly helped to defeat one's enemies, victory in the end was determined by the gods. Before entering battle, oracles were consulted to make certain that the king's decisions had the gods' favour, and a number of other rituals could be performed to ensure that the gods supported the king's cause".[15]

We can observe that the fight, the battle in a strict sense, is separated and delimited from the state before and the state after it. The *transitus* from peace to war (with different stages of escalation) and vice versa are accompanied by collective rites of passage that touch the society (for the Ancient Near East: the earthly and the divine society as well) as a whole, but applies to the army in special, as it is a society within the society with a strict hierarchy and rules of greeting and behaviour, with uniformed clothing, external badges and clear symbols – and rituals. Rituals can create participation and identification of individuals with a community but also impersonal distance. Is it conceivable, that, especially in case of war, rituals play an eminent role as a means of exoneration of the individual, and that the formalised communication serves as a collective procedure of legitimation of organised (group) violence – if, at all, we acknowledge war as organised violence of one group against another?

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[14] Reuter, 2001: 1766.

[15] Schwemer, 2007: 29.

Materials and sources

In view to our topic I will present and discuss some sources from ANE in short.[16] The Hebrew Bible provides several references on rituals in the context of war.[17] Whereas it informs us exclusively in a *narrative* manner, the evidence from the cuneiform tradition sometimes provides us not only with the *quod*, but also with information about the *quomodo* of the respective rituals, the *dicenda* and *agenda*, in the shape of so-called ritual texts and ritual tablets.[18] Generally, we have by far more ritual texts, which only contain the *dicenda*, than ritual tablets, which define the *agenda* of the ritual officiants and the other agents respectively. As far as I can see, we have direct and indirect sources about ritual in the context of war. They tell us about oracles, purification rituals, sacrifices and other preparation rites and rites of de-escalation and re-integration

Preparatory Procedures: Oracles and Declaration of War
Divination – Oracles

We apply our question to societies of the antiquity, and, at first and basically we only should ask for the sources we have.

From ancient Greece, from the societies in the Levant, and from the Assyrians and Babylonians we know, that waging war is preceded by highly ritualised procedures of obtaining oracles. From Greece[19] and the Old Testament[20] we have literary references on oracular questions before waging war, e.g. in Judges 18. The Danites were still on search for their home-turf, and an oracle made them sure that they could continue their wandering:

> "And they said to him, 'Inquire of God, please (שְׁאַל־נָא בֵאלֹהִים), that we may know whether the journey on which we are setting out will succeed.'

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[16] Cp. basically Jean, 2013 who lists the sources according their genre, and Melville, 2016 who focusses on the evidence of the Neo-Assyrian period, where the lion's share of our sources comes from.

[17] Schmitt, 2004: 274–282, Schmitt, 2014.

[18] There are not too many sources. They are edited and/or philologically treated in van Dijk, 1973; Elat, 1982; Mayer, 1988; Mayer, 2001; Karner, 2006; Schwemer, 2007; Schwemer, 2012; Lang, 2016.

[19] Tomkins, 2013: 528.

[20] Oswald, 2008, and especially in Melammu conferences we may ask, why some passages in the historical sections of the Hebrew bible seem to be so "Greek".

> "And the priest said to them, 'Go in peace. The journey on which you go is under the eye of the Lord.'"
> (Judg 18, 5–6, Engl. Standard Version)

So they did, but not with a peaceful intention. Recent research is tending to evaluate this oracle not as a private oracle, but one of the Hebrew military oracles being rather similar to Ancient Near Eastern divination practices.[21] The Phrase שׁאל באלהים (*šā'al bē'lōhîm*) – verbally "ask God" makes us sure, that we have a technical term for a oracular procedure.

Not only oracles, but also their misunderstandings respectively are object of narrations in the Greek and the Hebrew tradition as well. I only want to mention the narration about Kroisos in Hdt 1 (53ff.) and a strikingly similar episode in 1 Kings 22, where the Israelite king Ahab fatally misunderstood the content of oracles too.

Leaving aside the narrative sections concerning oracles as a ritual element of preparation of warfare, I want to search for elements that can tell us not only the *quod* but also the *quomodo*. From Assyria of the first half of the 1st millennium BCE stems a dense material attestation of oracular queries to the gods, whether the time or the occasion for a combat were favourable or not. The lion's share of the extant queries deal with oracles concerning warfare.[22]

Declaring War

Declaring war in the ancient world seems to include several informal and formal procedures before the true war began. As far as I can see, the Ancient Near East does not provide us with rich sources on the procedures, or even rituals, of declaring war to the opposite party.[23] In other words: This aspect of ancient warfare unfortunately is illuminated very poorly.

The Torah, in the Book of Deuteronomy, in its framework of a historicizing retrospect prescribes in short terms the (legal) procedure of declaring war:

> "When you march up to attack a city (כי־תקרב אל־עיר להלחם עליה), make its people an offer of peace (וקראת אליה לשׁלום). If they accept and open their gates, all the people in it shall be subject to forced labor and shall work for

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[21] Bray, 2006: 137.

[22] Cp. basically Starr, 1990; Lambert, 2007 and recently Melville, 2016: 221–222.

[23] For the few and vague hints from the cuneiform tradition in the annals of Ashurbanipal and Muršili see Gerardi, 1986: 33.

> you. If they refuse to make peace and they engage you in battle, lay siege to that city. When the Lord your God delivers it into your hand, put to the sword all the men in it. As for the women, the children, the livestock and everything else in the city, you may take these as plunder for yourselves. And you may use the plunder the Lord your God gives you from your enemies." (Dtn 20,10–14, New international Version)

Interestingly, the chapter of the book which is dedicated to the procedures of warfare, begins with the involvement of the priests. According to the text they should prepare the community of a settlement for the fight at hand. For ancient Rome e.g. we know the activities of the *fetiales*, a certain group of cultic officials who mainly were engaged in the formal procedures of declaring war and for (that were in fact an ensemble of measures, speech acts, symbolic actions, maybe even rituals, which repeatedly and increasingly made visible the threat of a battle at hand, but originally designed in order to avoid the battle itself) the observance of the *ius gentium*.[24]

According to Pamela Gerardi, there is an ancient document that could mirror something like a declaration of war.[25] The cuneiform tablet BM 55467 has the remarkable content of a (literary) attempt of a justification for waging war from a Babylonian perspective, including references to historical incidents between Assyria and Babylonia as reasons for retribution.[26] As such, it could parallel the Roman custom of the *rerum repetitio*, a series of accusations and claims repeatedly presented to the enemy,[27] which preceded the war, too. The relevant passage is as follows:

> "[…] you became hostile to Babylon, [the booty] of the lands you plundered and you [removed] to the land of the Subarians. [The proper]ty of

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[24] The institution of the *fetiales*, of course, had a diachronic development. Their alleged? – if one is willed to trust the sources – physical transgression of the enemy's border in the early period, and their symbolic acts, like throwing a spear into the enemy's land in order to announce the *indictio belli* were repremented and replaced by a formal act in Rome itself without the physical presence of the opponent. Cf. basically Rüpke, 1999: 97–117.

[25] Gerardi, 1986.

[26] According to W. G. Lambert, BM 55467 contains not a formal declaration of war, but a document of diplomatic exchange. The two kings whose names are not preserved on the tablet could be Nabupolassar and Sîn-šar-iškun, at a time, when Babylonia had already gained the upper hand over the Assyrian territory (Lambert, 2005: 206).

[27] Walbank, 1949; Rüpke, 1999; 97–100.

> the Esagila and Babylon you exposed and you sent [to Nineveh]. [You kill] ed the elders of the city; you have captured the one who rose up (against you). Your […] you abandoned; you filled the lands with [disorder]. [The def]eat of the Babylonians you inflicted and you brought dark[ness]. You imposed punishment; you incited un[rest], [re]bellion in the land you fomented; you did not create peace […]"
> (BM 55467, lines 2–10, ed. and transl. by Gerardi 1986, 34–35)

These are heavy accusations, rather, according to Da Riva, "the Assyrian's criminal record contains the worst atrocities that one might imagine",[28] and together with the phrase preserved "[…] *eninni zikir šumīya ul galtāt qibīt pīya ul magrāt ṭuppu ašpurkamma lā* […]" "Now, the mentioning of my name you did not fear, my command you did not obey, the tablet I sent to you and you did not […]" (lines 16–17) seem to resume the *casus belli*.

We cannot clearly judge whether the document is a real declaration of war, or whether it is part of a diplomatic correspondence before the war. As it is available to us as a document from the Nabopolassar's time itself, but as a later copy, we do not know if it only has a historicizing character. Yet even the literary genre of this source is doubted.[29] It bears, however, signs of high literary quality, as it reflects on[30] and inverts material known from other sources, even older Assyrian royal inscriptions.[31]

Ritually Purifying the Army and the Weapons

Purification is an, or even *the* essential element in Mesopotamian rituals.[32] It is also attested in connection with the army. There are some mentions in Greek sources about purification in military contexts, but not too much.[33] They seem to be rather different to Roman sources, where the *lustratio*

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[28] Da Riva, 2017: 80.

[29] "[…] could either be fictional missives based on genuine ones, or compositions simulating letters and based on previous documents – perhaps not even letters, but narrative texts of sorts – describing the events during the latter years of the Assyrian Empire from a Babylonian perspective, and rendered in the form of "fictional" letters with a historical basis" (Da Riva, 2017: 81).

[30] "The language of vengeance and divine providence was inspired on original inscriptions of Nabopolassar and Nabonidus, to which scholars of the Esagil temple probably had access" (Warzeggers, 2015: 213)

[31] A more detailed study on that would be necessary.

[32] Ambos, 2012; Lang, 2012a; Lang, 2012b; Lang, in print.

[33] Tomkins, 2013: 530.

exercitus could have been a ritual complex of purification rites, but – not only according to the term *lustratio* ("circumcircling") – it should better be interpreted as a cycle of "rites d'agrégation".[34] Purification can take place before and after the battle / campaign. I will be dealing later on with the reference in the OT in the context of post-war rituals. From epigraphic sources, namely royal inscriptions from Assyria, we know about the ritual of washing the weapons[35] *after* the royal army reached the seashore[36] (as a fringe of the world and therefore a liminal realm), or peculiar other places, like the sources of the Tigris.[37] These sources contain a narrative mentioning of a ritual action, but no more information about, how this was done. Possibly, a ritual tablet written in Sumerian from the Yale Babylonian Collection (YBC 4184)[38] can throw some light on this procedure, as it depicts the *agenda* of a lustration ritual, in which the army and the king are involved. The tablet's content shows striking parallels to other cleansing rituals from the Sumero-Akkadian cuneiform tradition – and cleansing is the ritual action it prescribes[39] –, but cannot be assigned to a known canonical series. It is even almost impossible to exactly date this tablet. Though we do not know whether the ritual prescribed has to take place before or after the campaign, clearly the goal of the ritual is to secure the success of the campaign. The success consists in the tribute (Sumerian: gu_2 – *biltu*), which may not be held back from the victorious king. From all ends of the inhabited world, from the swamps, from the sea, from the desert and the mountains the loot should be brought. Neither the name of the king nor the name of the city is mentioned. The tablet finishes with the words:

inim-inim-ma lugal $erin_2$-a-ni sikil-la-kam
"An incantation 'the king purifies his troops' is it".[40]

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[34] Rüpke, 1999: 146.
[35] Cp. basically Mayer, 2001 and recently Rollinger, 2012 and 2013.
[36] RIMA 2, 218,85; 226,26–27.
[37] RIMA 3, 66,70.
[38] *Editio princeps* van Dijk, 1973, recent treatment by Lang, 2016.
[39] Cp. Magen, 1986: 76–87.
[40] Lang, 2016: 4.

Sacrifices

Sacrificing before the fight seems to me to be a human *universale*. We find this in the 2nd book of the Iliad, where prayer and offering accompaign the preparations for the fight to come. We also find this in 1 Sam 7, when libation, fasting und offering precede a fight. The tablet from the YBC already mentioned, envisages a ritual offering of oil and incense. Other sources, like a ritual prescription from the British Museum for the Assyrian king (BM 98583)[41] against his foe interconnect ritual purifying with sacrificing, and it is possible and plausible that this fragment was a part of the series of "war rituals" that were desired by Assurbanipal, and that he had searched for.

Other Preparation Rites

There are rites which are preparative for the fight directly. They intend to focus on the battle itself and shall effectuate the death of or the triumph over the foe. The foe can be visualized or imagined by orientation of the ritual agent towards the direction of the foe to come or by materialising him by means of a substitute (figure), as a phenomenon and even technically similar to civil rituals against witchcraft.[42] Within these rites the foe can be killed (ritually) without being present yet.

Others rituals try to detract the portending evil of a battle by defending rites. So according to a war ritual preserved as a ritual prescription on a tablet from the British Museum[43], a girl has to be carried off to the hostile border after the king has had sex with her. According to Daniel Schwemer, the purpose of these rituals was to transfer the evil threatening the king to a substitute which then could be removed to the border, where it affected the source of the evil itself, namely the enemy trying to invade the king's land.[44]

I will lay my fingertip on a sample of preparation rites which is handed down as a short narrative in the Hebrew Bible on the one hand and, as one of the rather rare cuneiform ritual-tablets, which contain the *agenda* of a ritual on the other hand. This more detailed ritual in the context of preparations for war is told in 2 Kings 13. From here on we can draw a line

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41 Mayer, 1988.

42 See Schwemer, 2007.

43 As in BM 98583 (ed. Mayer, 1988).

44 Schwemer, 2007: 31

to our evidence of the cuneiform tradition which preserved an ensemble of ritual texts that indeed as a *genre* is different, but by content they seem to be related or at least significantly similar. I will leave aside the problem of redactional criticism of the Hebrew text and the philological issues of the ritual prescript of the respective cuneiform text. In both cases the king is engaged into a ritual action with his bow and arrows *before* a fight. In both cases we have a repetition of singular ritual elements. Repetition is a character of ritual design, and, we have similar technical terms in the shape of dealing with the bow.[45]

The Hebrew text tells us about an encounter of the late prophet Elisha, a short time before his death, with the King of Judah, Jehoash:

> "Now when Elisha had fallen sick with the illness of which he was to die, Joash king of Israel went down to him and wept before him, crying, "My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" And Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows." So he took a bow and arrows. Then he said to the king of Israel, "Draw the bow," and he drew it. And Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands. And he said, "Open the window eastward," and he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot," and he shot. And he said, "The Lord's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Syria! For you shall fight the Syrians in Aphek until you have made an end of them." And he said, "Take the arrows," and he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground with them." And he struck three times and stopped."
> (2 Kings 13,14–18; Engl. Standard Version)

The cuneiform text (K.3438a+9912//K.9923//K. 10209)[46] which prescribes the ritual action(s) before(?)[47] the real fight against the foe by virtually anticipating the encounter between him and the king. These *agenda* are in some respects very similar to our narration from the Hebrew bible, as in both cases:

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[45] Terminological parallels which can be recognized by the transfer of an idea via loanwords or cognate terms could be hint to the fact that we have to reckon with a possible cultural loan or borrowing. Cp. Lang, 2015 and Bhayro, 2013.

[46] Menzel, 1982: T82–T86; Deller's contribution in Pongratz-Leisten / Deller / Bleibtreu, 1992, esp. 341–346; for a recent treatment with a normalisation of the Akkadian text and a detailed commentary see Karner, 2006.

[47] After having studied the preserved text, the present author dares to express some doubts: The final lines of the ritual prescription insinuate the very end of the battle, the triumph (see below). Or is it only a ritual anticipation of the final triumph to be expected?

- The king is involved.
- The king has to draw the bow.
- In both cases the foe has to be overwhelmed either by shooting into his direction (Hebrew Bible) or by shooting (symbolically) into the foe's heart (Assyrian ritual).
- The technical terms even seem to be identical: The instruction on the Assyrian text *šiltāḫu ina qassi šarkubu* – "to load [verbally: "let ride"] the arrow into the bow" has its parallel in the Hebrew phrase *harkēḇ yāḏḵā ʿal haq-qæšæṯ*– "to let the hand ride on the bow" (2 Kings 13,15).
- In both cases the king has to shoot by command of an officiant (verbal form: imperative).
- In both cases an arrow gains ritual agency by the help of a divine agent: In the Hebrew text Jahwe makes a normal arrow a victorious arrow, in the Assyrian text, it is Assur's arrow which shall effectuate the triumph over the foe.
- In both cases the king has to do something with an arrow – we do not exactly know, what he has to do –, and he has to repeat this three times.

In sum, though not being able to prove that the Biblical narration is indeed influenced by this Neo-Assyrian ritual prescription, we have to state that the similarities, regardless of the different genres of documentation (narrative prose in the Hebrew text; a ritual prescription in the cuneiform sources), remain striking.

Ritual Actions During the Campaign

Leaving the city in order to cross the steppes, deserts and mountains means to expose oneself to wayward and chaotic powers. It is a liminal state in a double sense: The soldiers in the campaign, though being in their new order, lack the order of their normal lives. The city itself is in the state of "unbalanced control"[48]. According to our sources which stem from 1st mill. Assyria, the army was accompanied by its mobile sanctuary consisting in mobile images of their gods in the shape of standards and emblems (šu-nir; uri$_3$[-gal]; *šurinnu*; *urigallu*, *urinnu*, *itḫuru*),[49] which were

[48] Capomacchia / Rivaroli, 2014: 172.

[49] See Pongratz-Leisten's contribution in Pongratz-Leisten / Deller / Bleibtreu, 1992.

venerated in the open, whereas the king used to live in a tent. It seems that the sanctuary of the respective city – and at least certain elements of its cult, is also present during the campaign in the military camp.[50]

Regaining the Normal Daily Life: Rites of De-escalation and Re-integration

Coming Back Home

A society at war, especially its fighting part, the army, respectively has to pass certain stages in order to regain their normal status.[51] War is connected to death and one of the tasks soldiers have master, is to deal with dead bodies.[52] This touches the themes of ritual purity – and mental health!

Since at least the Vietnam War the social awareness concerning soldiers returning from war into the normal society has increased. Recent military studies refer to PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), "moral injury" and "soul injury" of the soldiers and the question how to optimally reintegrate them into their societies.[53] have already referred to ritual cleansing in the context of warlike actions. From the references in the cuneiform sources about the washing of weapons in the sea and the sources of the Tigris we know, that these procedures are not the very end of a campaign, but at certain destinations. Purification can also be, and is often the end of a warlike action, as it is depicted in the Hebrew Bible. It does not provide us with much detailed information about purification rites in the context of war. However, we may assume that the contact with blood and dead bodies created impurity[54] as is repeatedly mentioned in the Pentateuch. One passage indeed refers on the purification of the army after the attack. I think about the pericope in Numbers 31, which tells as one of the most brutal passages the sack and the mass killing of the Midianites by Israel's army. The end of this endeavour which reflects the concept of the Ancient Near Eastern phenomenon of *Cherem*,[55] the almost total eradication of the defeated and the consecration of the booty to the gods, is a ritual

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[50] Cultic life in the camp is reflected on the Assyrian wall reliefs. Cp. basically Reade, 2005.

[51] Mayer, 2001.

[52] Ur-Nanše's battle description from ca. 25th cent. BCE might give one of the first accounts by mentioning the making of burial mounds (SAHAR.DU$_6$.TAG$_4$) for fallen soldiers (if we understand this term correctly).

[53] Kelle, 2013: 232.

[54] Wright, 1985.

[55] Schäfer-Lichtenberger, 1994; recently Dietrich, 2007.

segregation and purification of all men who were engaged in the fight and had killed anybody. Moses‘ instruction about this cleansing ceremony is as follows:

> "Encamp outside the camp seven days. Whoever of you has killed any person and whoever has touched any slain, purify yourselves and your captives on the third day and on the seventh day. You shall purify every garment, every article of skin, all work of goats' hair, and every article of wood." Then Eleazar the priest said to the men in the army who had gone to battle: 'This is the statute of the law that the Lord has commanded Moses: only the gold, the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead, everything that can stand the fire, you shall pass through the fire, and it shall be clean. Nevertheless, it shall also be purified with the water for impurity. And whatever cannot stand the fire, you shall pass through the water. You must wash your clothes on the seventh day, and you shall be clean. And afterward you may come into the camp.'"
> (Numbers 31,19–24, English Standard Version)

The ritual actions after the battle – and we could even follow the reference in Numbers 31, are not only cleansing, but

- Demonstration and distribution and re-distribution of booty (to the warriours, the non warriours *and* the gods)
- Founding memory
- Celebration of the victory and procession
- Lament as a counterpart to the victory procession

The celebration of the triumph is also rudimentary attested in cuneiform sources and shall reflected, in short, as follows:

Celebrating the Victory

The end of a victorious battle, not directly after the battle itself, but distant from it, is celebrated by a public act, a triumph. It does not only engage the army and – in a central role – the king, but the society as a whole. A triumph – and this the case not only in Rome,[56] but in Assyria as well – as a complex of ritual acts, involves as a sacral act not only the society but the heavenly world, too. As it is depicted in the slabs 5–7 in the throne room of Ashurnasirpal II's North-West Palace at Nimrud. Ashurnasirpal

[56] Rüpke, 1990: 223–234.

seems to be taking part in a liturgical procedure / procession that reminds us of a triumph,[57]

According to the iconography and the written sources as well, we know that as a conclusion of the warlike actions there was a festival in which the victory of the king against the foe was ritually put on stage and celebrated. Ritual agents in these games were also persons belonging to the cultic personnel, like *nārū* ("singers"), *kurgarrû-* and *asinnū*(-"priests")[58]. Music and dance seemed to be essential in these festivals. At the end of these *mēlultu*-games the king and the army entered the city,[59] a procedure with a special designation: *erāb āli* ("entering the city", *introitus*).

A ritual prescription on the ritual tablet which I have already mentioned above in connection with the ritual preparation of the arrows and the anticipatory(?) killing of the foe, ends up with the following passage (the ritual scene with the arrows was immediately preceding) which clearly signals the very end of a campaign:

LUGAL *du-ma-qí* ⌜*ul-la*⌝
a-ar-a-te ú-še-el-lu-u-ne
LUGAL *i-*⌜*qar*⌝*-rib* LÚ.KÚR-*šú* KUR-*ad*
ki-ma LUGAL LÚ.KÚR-*šú ik-ta-šad*
du-ma-qí i-na-áš-ši
GIŠ.BALAG *ina nag-la-bi-*⌜*šú*⌝ *e-lal*
ina IGI DINGIR.MEŠ *il-lak* UDU.SISKUR.MEŠ *e-pu-šú*
⌜*k/qaq*⌝*-qu-ru i-na-šiq*
⌜*e*⌝*-rab* URU *a-na ma-dak-te up-pa-áš*
[*a-n*]*a qer-si er-rab nap-tu-nu* GAR-*an*
[LU]GAL *i-ḫad-du*
The king takes off his adornment
They raise the shields
The king approaches, he defeats his foe
After the king has defeated his foe,
he carries his adornment (again)
He *hangs*(?) the *lyre* upon his shoulder[60]

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[57] Nadali, 2013: 78

[58] Menzel, 1986: 35; Nadali, 2013: 80–81.

[59] Menzel, 1986: 35

[60] Not clear at all. Karner, 2006: 182 reads the lines on K.10209 as follows: *šarru pilaggu ina naglabīšu inašši* and translates: "[…] hängt das Stilett [i.e. a "dagger" M.L.] an seine

He steps in front of the gods,[61] and they offer offerings
He kisses the soil
He performs a triumph (*erāb āli* ("entering the city") for the camp[62]
He enters the vine bower / vine-covered arbour, her organizes a meal / a meal is organized (GAR-*an*)
The king rejoices
(K.10209, lines 14–24)[63]

Final Remarks

All our sources tell us about the ritual actions before a battle, some of them after it. I have to admit: What I do not know, is, to what extent the battle itself is accompanied by rituals, or, moreover, the battle itself was seen as a ritual or, the opposite, the fight itself was, because out of order, ritualless. I am inclined to think that the fight in a strict sense is without any ritual. It is the chaos *par excellence*. The *transitus* from the order (of a society, or its fighting part, the army) into its highest peril and the way back is accompanied by ritual acts (ritual framing), not the stable instable status of the battle itself. We know about cultic actions in the camps,[64] and we know, that the gods are present via their standards and emblems in the field.[65] However, we do not know anything about ritual actions *during* the battle itself. The story about Moses' prayer with his risen arms supported by Aaron and Hur during the fight against Amalek (Ex 2:17) could be an exception. However, this enigmatic ritual silence remembers me of a book, *Mein weißer Frieden*, written by Marica Bodrožić. The author came from Yugoslavia to Germany at the age of 10. As a young woman she began to search her roots and to ask about the reasons for the brutal war on the Balkan peninsula. When having interviewed veterans of the war, her contemporaries, young old men, about the war itself, she got no answer. They talked about the technical assets of their prostheses blazing in the sunlight, but nobody told her about the things during the battle. So I

Hüfte". The present author prefers the reading GIŠ.BALAG. As an important instrument used in the cult, it is often associated with Ishtar, the goddess of war.

61 I.e., according to the context: Adad and Nergal.

62 *erāb āli ana madakte uppaš* cannot mean "Beim Betreten der Stadt errichtet er ein Feldlager" (Karner, 2006: 183).

63 See Deller's contribution in Pongratz-Leisten / Deller / Bleibtreu 1992, 343.

64 Reade 2005.

65 Pongratz-Leisten / Deller / Bleibtreu, 1992.

leave us with a question: We know about preparation rites, we know about rites of de-escalation; both of them obviously are not seasonal but "rites of group crisis"[66] – as modern ritual studies since Victor Turner characterize them. Nevertheless, if I am not in error, we have to live with a ritual silence during the war itself.

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[66] Turner, 1969: 168.

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The Use of Divination in Ancient Greek Warfare*

Kai Trampedach

The title of this paper needs some qualification. I might just as well have called it "The *various uses* of divination in the ancient Greek *concept* of warfare". Since my sources are almost exclusively literary, it is inevitable to treat the topic in part as a literary phenomenon. First, I would like to give an overview of the topic which I am going to present. Basically, the paper shall discuss four questions:

1. What is divination? What kinds of divination were relevant in ancient Greek warfare?
2. Making sense of past and present: How does divination contribute to collective acceptance and understanding of past and present? How does it lend sense and structure to events?
3. Present and future decisions: How does divination contribute to present and future military challenges during an ongoing campaign? How does divination influence and confirm either the process of decision-making or the strategy in general?
4. Conclusion: Divination and strategic rationality. How does divination relate to strategic rationality? Should it be regarded as an irrational factor, or does it support strategic rationality?

The author would like to point out that the following discussion is based on evidence from the classical period, although what the results presented here about the topic should, with some qualification, be applicable to other periods of ancient Greek history as well.

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* The argument of this paper is based on parts of my book *Politische Mantik. Die Kommunikation über Götterzeichen und Orakel im klassischen Griechenland* (Heidelberg, 2015), to which I refer the kind reader for further explication and notes. Here, I confine myself to the most basic references. For assistance with the translation and for helpful suggestions, I wish to thank Jakob Brüssermann.

What is Divination?

Divination assumes that there is a human ability to receive messages from gods or other supernatural powers, to 'read' those messages, and to deduce from them the appropriate course of action. Hence, it is a method to obtain knowledge, which almost every pre-modern human society recognized and practiced, and which still to this day exerts important influence in many 'primitive' societies.[1] In antiquity divination was especially important in military contexts, that is in situations in which survival supposedly depended on careful procedure and accurate observation and communication with the gods. In other words: during a campaign, divination functioned as a means of reconnaissance.

Mantic communication could be initiated either by human beings or the gods, and was then referred to as provoked or spontaneous divination respectively. The Greeks in general and especially Greek soldiers regarded striking cosmic and weather phenomena such as solar and lunar eclipses, thunderstorms and earthquakes as *spontaneous*, meaningful expressions of the will of the gods.[2] Mantic significance was thus always ascribed to things which deviated from normality or formed exceptions to the rules. This deviation indicated a disruption in the relationship between gods and men; as such it bore a negative meaning for the addressees. In almost every case our sources report that soldiers reacted with fear and trembling to natural irregularities. In such cases the commander with the help of the seers had the difficult task to reduce their fear and reinforce the troops' morale. How could he accomplish this task? Firstly through ritual: start active communication with the gods by staging prayers and sacrifices. Secondly through interpretation: since in military confrontations when both sides alike observed an eclipse or felt an earthquake it was unclear which side was the addressee, the commander had to convince his troops that the bad omens were aimed at the opponent's side.

The most important form of *provoked* divination within the context of ancient Greek warfare was extispicy, the inspection of sacrificial victims.[3] After prayer and sacrifice, seers analyzed the liver, then the milt, and finally the remaining entrails of the sacrificed animal. To this end, goats, lambs and calves were normally used before river-crossings, sieges, battles or

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1 Cf. Trampedach, 2015: 9–16.

2 Cf. Trampedach, 2015: 30–94.

3 Cf. Trampedach, 2015: 146–178.

even just before decampment. During campaigns sacrificial signs were provoked before every important decision; generally, the leaders looked for confirmation from the gods in every critical and ominous situation. Xenophon explains how the Spartan king sets out with an army:

"First he offers up sacrifice at home to Zeus the Leader and to the god associated with him. If the sacrifice appears propitious, the Fire-bearer takes fire from the altar and leads the way to the borders of the land. There the King offers sacrifice again to Zeus and Athena. Only when the sacrifice proves acceptable to both these deities does he cross the borders of the land. And the fire from these sacrifices leads the way and is never quenched, and animals for sacrifice of every sort follow. At all times when he offers sacrifice, the King begins the work before the dawn of day, wishing to forestall the goodwill of the god."[4]

Xenophon attributes an extraordinary thorough sequence of sacrifices to the Spartans.[5] Yet there is no fundamental difference between the Spartan practice and that of other Greek armies. The commander (in our example: the King of Sparta) ordered sacrifices whenever he saw fit. It is he (and not the seer), who carries out the sacrifice in the name of the army.[6] As can be seen from the frequent repetition of sacrifices, the validity period of signs under the variable conditions of war has been judged as being quite limited. Each new situation demanded new coverage. The commander also responded with sacrifice to spontaneous, unexpected signs which denied an easy interpretation and therefore added to the soldiers' feeling of insecurity. This form of communication with the gods then either helped the soldiers to recover confidence or was taken as a confirmation of the warning.[7]

Most sacrifices took place in the camp and were called ἱερά (like – in metonymic transference – the sacrificial signs themselves). The sacrificial animal was killed at a provisional altar and after screening and burning of the entrails on the altar its meat was consumed by the community. But what, if no altar could be erected and no fire could be ignited? For such circumstances the Greeks developed a special kind of sacrifice which they called σφάγια (slaughterings), for which they did not need either altar or

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4 Xen. Lak. pol. 13,2–3; cf. Jacquemin, 2000, 57–59.

5 Xen. Lak. pol. 13,5; cf. Richer, 1999: 141f.

6 Cf. Lonis, 1979: 106f.

7 For example: Soph. Ant. 998–1022; Xen. hell. 4,4,5; Plut. Kim. 18,4; Plut. Alex. 57,4–5; Arr. anab. 4,15,7–8.

fire and after which the meat was not eaten. Occasions for σφάγια were crossings of rivers and seas and, of course, battles, while sacrifices were offered in front of the battle line immediately before the beginning of the fighting. In both cases, the purpose of σφάγια was primarily expiation and it was intended to win over the gods. In many cases however it had a mantic dimension as well: Signs were not looked for in the entrails (very often there would be no time for that), but already in the patterns of blood spatter at the final cut.[8]

Making Sense of Past and Present

In the Greeks' view, messages from the gods, whether through provoked or spontaneous signs, often point to real events in the future. These signs are potentially ambiguous, and frequently cannot be interpreted according to a coherent and traditional formula, as in other mantic cultures (like Rome or ancient Mesopotamia); rather, those who are concerned by the signs must interpret them in direct relation to the specific situation in which they occur.[9] The appropriate and correct meaning can therefore be determined only *post festum* or *ex eventu*. One consequence of this is that Greek divination offers an exceptional instrument for the explanation of the past, which accounts for its popularity in literature. Accordingly, there is almost no ancient Greek historian who does not employ mantic motifs.

Already Herodotus, the first historian, makes frequent use of the literary possibilities of divination. Thus, he associates a series of inauspicious signs with the Persian advance against Greece in the spring and summer of 480 BCE.[10] First, there is a fictitious eclipse of the sun at the departure of the Persian army from Sardis. At the foot of Mount Ida, in the land of Ilium, thunder and lightning strike the army, killing a significant number of soldiers. After a sacrifice in Ilium, the army runs panic-striken through the night, which Herodotus does not explain further. He then goes on to relate a long conversation, ostensibly held in Abydus between the Persian king of kings, Xerxes, and his uncle, Artabanus. Artabanus warns Xerxes

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8 Stengel, 1910: 92–95; Pritchett, 1979: 83–90; Lonis, 1979: 107–110; Jameson, 1991: 200–212; Jacquemin, 2000: 59f.; Parker, 2000.

9 For the profile of Greek divination in comparison with Mesopotamian, Etruscan and Roman practices cf. Trampedach, 2015: 534–564.

10 Hdt. 7,37–57.

of the dangers of the campaign, not for the first time, but still in vain. After the army has crossed the Hellespont, a monstrosity, a *téras méga*, occurs, which Xerxes refuses to lend the slightest attention to, although according to Herodotus it is easy to interpret: a mare gave birth to a hare. Herodotus (7,57,1) himself provides the interpretation:

> "Clearly it meant that he was to lead an army against Greece with the greatest pomp and circumstance, and then to come running for his life back to the place he started from."

The writer takes the opportunity to mention another sign, another abnormal birth, which had been given to Xerxes when he was still in Sardis; this time, the interpretation is left to the reader or hearer. A she-ass gave birth to a foal with both male and female genitalia, and the male organs are superimposed on the female ones. This second sign, which combines metaphors of animals and genitalia, modifies the message of the first: Xerxes advances courageously, but he will retreat as a coward. By this presentation, Herodotus gives a continuous commentary of the gods on the advance of the Persian horde. It indicates, that not even such a massive military superiority can guarantee success, if the gods deny their consent. Of course, the situations in which the signs appear are ominous or mantically significant: at the departure from Sardis, after the arrival in the Troad, following the sacrifice in Ilium, before and after the crossing from Asia into Europe. On each occasion, the Persian Great King responds with either ignorance or *hubris*. According to Herodotus' literary construction Xerxes has only himself to blame when the disaster presaged by these signs finally befalls him.[11]

The fact that literature makes use of divination however does not mean that divination is exclusively a literary phenomenon. The function of making sense of events is already evident in the oral tradition. Immediately after significant events, the participants often turned their attention to divination, in order to understand these events. In other words: the complex process of divination is rooted in the perception and interpretation of the present. Depending on the further developments of events, some perceptions and interpretations will become meaningless and fall into oblivion, while others prove to be plausible and are thus remembered. And these perceptions and interpretations will be modified further in the course of time in the light of

[11] Cf. Hollmann, 2011: 72–74, who gives a plausible semiotic interpretation of the two *térata*.

experience. Only at the end of such a process are these orally transmitted motifs of oracles, signs and dreams taken over into literature and employed to structure a written narrative.

This process is particularly evident in the unusual increase in oracles and signs in the account of the battle of Leuctra in 371 BCE, in which the Thebans sealed the fate of Spartan hegemony in Greece. In this specific case, no canonical interpretation of these omens had developed: the principal motifs of the Leuctride legend, the events in the Theban sanctuaries, and the role of the Trophonius oracle have come down to us in different versions.[12] None of these mantic manifestations exerted a decisive influence on the course of events or on the decisions of the leaders before the battle and the sources report that these signs at best had an encouraging effect on the Theban soldiers. Apart from that, the narrated oracles and signs are in fact addressed to posterity. They reassure the retrospective observer that earthly events, as unpredictable and unexpected as they may seem from a finite human perspective, are disclosed in advance and sanctioned by the gods, not only immediately before or during the fatal events, but also well ahead of their occurrence. Nonetheless, in the case of Leuctra, it is not primarily a question of literary invention. The contemporary transmission, which is unclear and characterized by variation (especially Xenophon, Ephorus, and Kallisthenes) shows that regardless of any literary construction mantically relevant observations must have been gathered immediately after the battle and interpreted in the light of the event. This leads to two implications: 1. The battle of Leuctra was immediately recognized by participants and contemporary Greeks as a historical *caesura*, which required an exceptional explanation; 2. Such a caesura is hardly imaginable without the involvement of the gods. Greek divination provides the means for a secure interpretation of the past, which are anchored in the structures of Greek perception. Only on this basis can divination then be employed as an effective means of characterization in literary contexts.[13]

The desire of wider circles of the population to perceive divine intervention in contemporary events is perhaps best seen in the reserved and critical commentator Thucydides. He shows how the Athenians sought to understand the misfortune which befell them at the beginning of the

[12] Cf. Trampedach, 2015: 356–368.

[13] Trampedach, 2015: 377f.

Peloponnesian war as a fulfillment of prophecy.[14] The search for suitable oracles did not have any immediate application to either the over-crowding of the city, the desolation of Attica or the plague, but it satisfied the need to associate an inexplicable situation with occurrences on a higher level, to give it the character of necessity, and to show that it had its place within a transcendental order. Divination destroys historical contingency, and makes sense of failures and successes alike.

Present and Future Decisions

Apart from lending sense and structure to events, the second important function divination fulfills is to facilitate difficult decisions or at least to secure the success of their outcome, although due to the scarcity of available sources, we are rarely in a position to describe exactly how it does so. As we have already seen, reports of divine manifestations in narrative sources are often embedded in literary strategies, which makes any attempt at reconstructing their original occurrence a highly speculative undertaking. Also, extant inscriptions from the classical period with reports of oracles are relatively rare, and usually reflect only one aspect of mantic practice, i.e. cultic matters, and inevitably reveal little of the broader context. If we wish to find firmer ground, we should consider cases which we cannot understand without reference to divine signs and their interpretation. I intend to examine two of those: the first concerns a spontaneous sign which had profound historical consequences, while the second concerns an impediment to action due to provoked signs. In contrast to divination in the political sphere, divination during a campaign could play a major role in decision-making – owing to the circumstances, as we will see now.

During the siege of Syracuse in the summer of 413 BCE, the Athenians found themselves in a critical position. The generals were unable to agree on a suitable course of action. Eventually, Nicias succeeded in preventing a rapid withdrawal, for fear of the reaction of the Athenian assembly and on the grounds of reassuring information from Syracuse. However, as the situation continued to deteriorate with the arrival of more auxiliaries on the Syracusan side and increasing spreading in their own camp, the Athenians decided to withdraw. Thucydides (7,50,4) reports:

> "But after all was ready and when they were about to make their departure, the moon, which happened then to be at the full, was eclipsed and most

[14] Thuk. 2,17,1–2. 2,54,3–5; cf. Trampedach, 2015: 262–264.

> of the Athenians, taking the incident to heart, urged the generals to wait. Nicias also, who was somewhat too much given to divination and the like, refused even to discuss further the question of their removal until they should have waited thrice nine days as the soothsayers prescribed. Such, then, was the reason why the Athenians delayed and stayed on."[15]

A disastrous decision, as events would prove: in the following days and weeks, the Athenian fleet was destroyed and the army was entirely eliminated.[16]

An eclipse of the moon, which can be dated to the 27th of August, 413,[17] occurred as the Athenian army intended to begin their withdrawal. The mantic importance of the situation derived not only from the eclipse itself, but from its coincidence with the crucial decision. As I mentioned earlier, the Greeks (like all other known mantic cultures) typically did not regard eclipses and other irregular cosmic phenomena as reassuring. In the situation at hand the meaning of the eclipse seemed clear: the divinity advised against the Athenians' plans. At the time it was not surprising, especially in view of the threatening situation, that the Athenians reacted predominantly with fear and initially considered abandoning their plans. Naturally, Nicias shared this intention: unlike the other generals, he had argued for the continuation of the siege, and even as the strategic situation worsened dramatically, he was reluctant to agree to a withdrawal. Following the sign, he presumably felt assured in his reluctance, the more so because the seers also advocated staying put. Significantly, neither Thucydides nor later authors report any objection or opposition to this decision: on the contrary, Diodorus explicitly mentions that the generals, above all Demosthenes, who had previously pleaded for withdrawal, followed the advice of the seers.[18]

In a critical situation, a clear, intelligible sign had appeared, that seemed to strengthen the resolve of those concerned. It would be of little interest to discuss the episode, if the consequences had not turned out to be spectacular and, for the Athenians, catastrophic. But the disastrous consequences called for an explanation, which was to be found either in the mantic interpretation or in the way in which it was employed. Assuming that it was not entirely wrong to make a strategic decision based upon

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[15] Thuk. 7,50,4; cf. Flower, 2008: 114–119; Trampedach, 2015: 50–56.

[16] Cf. Thuk. 7,51–85.

[17] Ginzel, 1899: 178f.

[18] Diod. 13,12,6: οἱ περὶ τὸν Δημοσθένην συγκαταθέσθαι διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸ θεῖον εὐλάβειαν.

such a sign, an error must have been made in its interpretation. There are two possible culprits: either Nicias or the seer is to be held responsible. In the end Nicias was made the scapegoat. The fact that in this crucial situation he had allowed himself to be guided by signs and seers rather than by strategic calculations, rendered the episode an instance of his notorious *deisidaimonía*, or superstition. Thucydides supports this view by attributing to Nicias an excessive tendency to *theiasmós*, that is, communication with the gods.[19] His criticism could also be justified from a mantic point of view: What could a good seer have done for Nicias? Plutarch, in his biography of Nicias (23,5–6), gives two examples:

1. The later historian and seer, Philochorus, interpreted the eclipse in a pragmatic way: the sign does not warn against taking flight; on the contrary, it must be seen as a recommendation to do so: „Concealment is just what deeds of fear need, whereas light is an enemy to them.“[20] From this point of view, the eclipse of the moon in 413 can be seen as a direct divine intervention in favour of the Athenians and only in that respect can it be taken as a sign. This interpretation entails no change in the semantic value, but merely an inversion of the application; Philochorus changes the perspective, as it were, and applies the negative meaning of the eclipse to the Syracusans. Such an interpretation, which does not warrant the fearful reaction of the participants, is not an idle academic exercise, but a proper means of reminding a nervous army of its duty – there are several other examples, where a heavenly irregularity was interpreted in a way which did not conflict with the demands of the military situation. Admittedly, one must be in a position to take full advantage of the figurative potential of a sign. Nicias and the other generals, however, lacked the confidence to advance such an interpretation.

2. Another criticism from the mantic perspective concerns the specific information given by the seer. According to Thucydides, the seers demanded a delay of three times nine days. *Enneads* constituted an ancient unit of calculation for rituals and oracles in Greece. The oracular formula which Thucydides also employs in other places, gives three nine-

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[19] Thuk. 7,50,4: ἦν γὰρ τι καὶ ἄγαν θειασμῷ τε καὶ τοιούτῳ προσκείμενος. The seer were harshly criticised, too: cf. Thuk. 8,1,1; Eur. Hel. 744–760 (the tragedy was performed in 412 BCE).

[20] Plut. Nik. 23,8 = Philochorus (FGrH 328) F 135: ἐπεὶ τὸ σημεῖον, ὥς φησι Φιλόχορος, φεύγουσιν οὐκ ἦν πονηρόν, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάνυ χρηστόν· ἐπικρύψεως γὰρ αἱ σὺν φόβῳ πράξεις δέονται, τὸ δὲ φῶς πολέμιόν ἐστιν αὐταῖς.

day weeks as one cycle of the moon, as does Plutarch. Here, the mantic intention is to delay the military withdrawal until the dangerous period of time, during which the divine warning sign is effective, has expired with the restoration of a perfect full moon. This interpretation sufficiently explains the semantic content of this period of three times nine days,[21] even when a later author who thinks he knows better, Plutarch, observes that the moon immediately after the eclipse appeared again in its full glory. In any case, the advice of the seers demanded from the Athenians a relatively long period of inactivity, and in fact they took no military initiative in the weeks following the eclipse, but only defended themselves against enemy attacks. Against this period of time, Plutarch cites a Hellenistic author named Autoclides, who observed in his *Exegetika*, that eclipses of the sun or the moon require only three days of caution. However, from a mantic point of view it seems reasonable to allow a month for the effects of an eclipse of the moon, a time frame which is confirmed in other cases.[22]

This discussion shows that in spite of the unanimous reaction of the participants involved, even a familiar sign such as an eclipse had no clear reference point and no definite time frame during which it was held to be effective. – I now proceed to my second example, which concerns a case of provoked divination.

On campaign, in most cases sacrificial signs aimed at obtaining the consent of the gods to a given course of action. Before the sacrifice the gods were asked to sanction through appropriate signs the decision already taken. But it could happen that the commander had to take an unforeseeable decision, that he found himself in a situation in which strategic rationality could not deliver adequate criteria. In such a situation, by being connected to an alternative (for example: advance or retreat), sacrificial divination could be employed to help the decision-making. Such a case occurred in 400 BCE at Kalpes Limen, an anchorage on the Black Sea between Heracleia and the mouth of the Bosphorus.[23]

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[21] The lunar eclipse which appeared in Babylonia at the 20th of September, 331 (Ginzel, 1899: 184f.) was successfully interpreted by Alexander's seer Aristander in the same way and with the same time limit (Arr. an. 3,7,6. 3,15,7); cf. Trampedach, 2015: 69–73.

[22] Cf. Trampedach, 2015: 59f. 70.

[23] The following analysis is based on the eyewitness-report of Xenophon: an. 6,4,10–6,5,2; cf. Trampedach, 2015: 162–165.

The mercenary troop of the so-called "Ten Thousand", on its way home to Greece, had been divided into three units at Heracleia, and rejoined in Kalpes Limen. At an assembly of the army, the commanders were confirmed, and Xenophon was established once more as *primus inter pares*. Xenophon advocated an immediate withdrawal by land, because supplies were difficult to obtain and there was a lack of ships. Before a difficult and dangerous advance through enemy territory, the army had to obtain divine approval. The sacrifice, which was intended as preparatory to their departure, and which was to be performed in the presence of the commanders and the Arcadian seer, Arexion, failed and the army remained inactive for the rest of the day. Xenophon, who had once publicly toyed with the idea of founding a city on the Black Sea, was then accused by "some" of manipulation. They insinuated that he had persuaded the seer to give a negative interpretation of the sacrifice. Xenophon responded by assembling the largest possible crowd to witness the sacrifice on the following day. The sacrifice was unsuccessful again and a third time as well. The soldiers grew anxious, because their supplies were running low. Xenophon began to reflect on the divine intention; he proposed to offer sacrifice not in preparation of departure, but merely in order to be able to collect food. Meanwhile, the rumor circulated that the Spartan commander Clearchus was approaching with transport, warships and animals from Byzantion, so that the tension relaxed. The fact that it was possible to avoid a dangerous march through enemy territory lent meaning to the negative signs. However, the attempt to obtain a favorable sign merely in order to obtain the urgently needed provisions also failed three times. Although Xenophon felt himself under pressure because of his starving men, he was unwilling to move without a favorable sign.

On the following day, the sacrifice was conducted in the presence of almost the entire army. There were no more sheep – the usual animal for sacrifice – and so oxen which pulled the transport carriage had to be used. Again, Xenophon sought to rationalize the divine refusal; he considered the sign a warning that the unseen enemy was prepared and proposed that the camp be moved to a site which could be more effectively defended, that they prepare for battle, and that they perform a sacrifice before their advance. In their impatience, the soldiers demanded an immediate sacrifice, which again failed, even though Xenophon had let his colleague, Kleanor from Arcadia, perform the sacrifice in his place. Obviously, every further course of action seemed impeded. One section of the army was unwilling to wait any longer. Led by the commander Neon from Asine,

almost two thousand men left the camp with sacks and jars to pillage food from the Bithynian villages in the area. This undertaking ended in disaster: cavalry under the Persian satrap, Pharnabazus, came to the assistance of the Bithynians and killed at least five hundred men. The survivors took refuge on a mountain and had to be rescued by Xenophon and a group of younger soldiers, who had heard of the escape. Even before this most urgent rescue operation, Xenophon did not move without sacrificing, as the day stood under an unfavourable sign. He took an ox from a wagon but did not perform the time-consuming ἱερά but rather the quicker σφάγια, apparently without looking for further signs. After the losses among the pillaging soldiers, a second misfortune followed on the same evening. Some Bithynians suddenly appeared from the undergrowth and attacked the sentries, killing some of them and pursuing the others into the camp. The „Ten Thousand" were able to repulse the attackers, but their morale was now very low. It was agreed to relocate the camp to a more secure position the next day and with a sufficient watch they passed the night under arms. The following day, four days after the first unsuccessful sacrifice, the situation changed dramatically. The relocation of the camp and its fortification were rapidly completed and a ship from Heracleia brought barley, animals for slaughter and wine.

> "Xenophon rose early and sacrificed with a view to an expedition, and with the first offering, the omens turned out favourably. Furthermore, just as the rites were nearing the end, the soothsayer, Arexion the Parrhasian, caught sight of an auspicious eagle, and bade Xenophon, Lead on!"[24]

The „Ten Thousand" now took the offensive and broke out of their unfortunate position. The same afternoon there was a confrontation with the troops of Pharnabazus, which won them so much respect that from this moment on neither at Kalpes Limen nor on their march to the Bosphorus did the enemy venture another attack on them.

The writer Xenophon presents the conduct of the mercenary leader Xenophon at Kalpes Limen as exemplary. The commander does not merely respect the signs and accordingly stays inactive: he seeks to understand the necessarily unarticulated warning of the gods in a responsible way, and to give it strategic expression. Following several failed attempts, this process of interpretation was eventually successful: Xenophon's proposal to move the camp to a more easily defensable position, to fortify

[24] Xen. an. 6,5,2.

it and then to offer a sacrifice with a view to armed offensive action, concurred with the intentions of the gods. The impatience of the soldiers delayed the implementation of Xenophon's proposal and resulted in the losses during the unarmed foraging excursion in the afternoon and in the attack on the sentries in the evening. Xenophon's interpretation of the situation was confirmed *ex negativo* after these misfortunes, and the army was then willing to follow his advice the following day. Then the signs changed, and as an eagle appearing in the sky at the same time encouraged the intentions of the Athenian mercenary leader. Regardless of how we judge the reliability of this narrative, it shows clearly how signs, whose interpretation in itself should present no difficulty, could become problematic when they impeded action. The signs did not replace the strategic considerations, but induced those involved to see the situation in a different light.[25]

Even in Xenophon's story there are these nonbelievers. Indeed, under certain circumstances commanders, sergeants and soldiers ignored negative signs. Usually, though, the indications of the signs were followed. Frequent manipulations are improbable, first because there is little evidence of it in the sources, second because it would mean a sort of schizophrenic mentality in commanders and seers as opposed to the 'believing' soldiers, and third, because commanders and seers sacrificed not in an isolated location but in the full light of public attention. Regularly, I think (and here I follow a consideration of Robert Parker), regarding extispicy generals and seers took the middle path – between blind confidence in divine guidance on the one hand and ruthless willingness to manipulate on the other. The rules of extispicy were flexible enough to consider the present conditions while "reading" the signs. Between good and bad sacrificial signs there were shades of grey, which could be interpreted in strategic terms. In addition, sacrifices could be repeated several times, particularly in conjunction with a different line-up or the changing of location if the first attempt failed. This leads to the conclusion that faced with bad omens, commanders gave up only those plans which they themselves were not convinced of.[26]

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[25] Similar cases are described in: Hdt. 6,76; Xen. an. 2,2,3–4; Xen. hell. 3,4,15. 4,7,7; Polyain. 3,9,9; cf. Parker, 2004: 133f.

[26] Parker, 2004: 144; ibid., 2000: 304–307.

Conclusion: Divination and Strategic Rationality

On campaign, when the soldiers were often forced to rush down unknown paths into unforeseeable, uncontrollable or even unsolvable situations, divination reduced the expenses of decision-making and helped to legitimize the commander's orders. Through extispicy seers ensured a permanent line of communication with the gods during the expedition. In a similar way spontaneous signs like thunder and lightning, earthquakes and eclipses could be subjected to strategic calculations, if the commanders rose to the occasion and convinced the soldiery through situational interpretation.

Interpretation, therefore, was of the utmost importance. Mantic understanding is conceived as an intellectual process of spontaneous combination in which divine message and the situation at hand illuminate each other. Consequently, in Greek sources the act of understanding very often is phrased by verbs with the prefix συν-: συνιέναι, συλλαμβάνειν, συμβάλλεσθαι, συμφρονεῖν. Bringing together and thinking together mediate the ability to act according to the demands of a given situation.[27] Erudition and expertise in contrast, if anything, play only a minor part. Divination, here, works as an eye-opener. It helps to view the situation in a new and fresh light. As Robert Parker (1989, 158) put it most convincingly: "Pious Greeks did not 'believe because it was absurd', but expected the gods to show good strategic sense."[28]

A careful commander would try to discover this sense and use the divine message to identify every potential danger. His interpretations of provoked and spontaneous signs addressed a public which did not accept a special rationality of divination but preferred to be convinced by political or strategic arguments. After referring to a famous oracle, Themistocles in Herodotus (8,60 γ) advised the commanders of the Greek fleet on the eve of the battle of Salamis – and his words may serve as well as a proper closing for this contribution:

> "Success comes oftenest to men when they make reasonable designs; but if they do not so, neither will god for his part side with human judgments."[29]

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[27] Trampedach, 2015: 464–480; cf. Hollmann, 2011: 107–117.

[28] Parker, 1989: 158.

[29] Hdt. 8,60 γ: Οἰκότα μέν νυν βουλευομένοισι ἀνθρώποισι ὡς τὸ ἐπίπαν ἐθέλει <εὖ> γίνεσθαι· μὴ δὲ οἰκότα βουλευομένοισι οὐκ ἐθέλει, οὐδὲ ὁ θεὸς προσχωρέει πρὸς τὰς ἀνθρωπηίας γνώμας.

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Tropaion. The Battlefield Trophy in Ancient Greece and Rome*

Wolfgang Havener

When, in the year 411 BC, an Athenian fleet met a Spartan squadron near the small island of Syme, some 24 km north of Rhodes, it was a relatively minor encounter in a war that had already lasted two decades. Accordingly, Thucydides summarized the battle rather briefly, merely stating that the Peloponnesian ships were able to encircle the Athenians, sinking six of their ships and forcing them to flee to Halicarnassus.[1] "After this", he goes on, "the Peloponnesians put in at Cnidos, where they were joined by the twenty-seven ships from Caunus, whereupon they set sail with the whole fleet, set up a trophy at Syme, and finally came to anchor again at Cnidos."[2] In other words, the Spartans and their allies gathered at Cnidos after the battle, sailed back to Syme, erected their *tropaion* and immediately returned to Cnidos. In his seminal study on *The Battlefield Trophy*, W. Pritchett listed the oddities of such an operation: it was mid-winter; the oarsmen had just returned from battle and were now forced to cover the distance again, twice; the *polis* of Syme remained under Athenian control, therefore the trophy was erected in hostile territory.[3] What lead the Spartans to take such steps in order to set up their *tropaion*? The conclusion Pritchett draws

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* I would like to thank Henning Börm, Ulrich Gotter, Norbert Kramer, and Kai Trampedach for their helpful comments and suggestions. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are taken from LCL.

1 See Falkner, 1995: 124 who attributes the battle a "greater importance […] than Thucydides has allowed".

2 Thuk. 8,42,5: μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο οἱ μὲν Πελοποννήσιοι ἐς Κνίδον κατάραντες καὶ ξυμμιγεισῶν τῶν ἐκ τῆς Καύνου ἑπτὰ καὶ εἴκοσι νεῶν αὐτοῖς ξυμπάσαις πλεύσαντες καὶ τροπαῖον ἐν τῇ Σύμῃ στήσαντες πάλιν ἐς τὴν Κνίδον καθωρμίσαντο.

3 Pritchett, 1974: 273f.; Pritchett's assumption of a distance of "approximately forty kilometers" from Cnidos to Syme has been corrected by Hornblower, 2008: 873 into "more like 15 km".

on the basis of the evidence, might at first seem rather obvious: "[…] the trophies became, at least in part, instruments of publicity for advertising the prowess of the victor."[4] Although no one would deny the correctness of this statement, the present chapter argues that Pritchett's observations on the Greek *tropaion* can be expanded in some respects, on the one hand by focusing on the mechanisms and functions of the ritual acts connected with the battlefield trophy, on the other by comparing it with the Roman use of this specific form of victory commemoration.[5] The first part of this contribution therefore gives an overview of the regulations concerning the Greek *tropaion*, demonstrating how they can be analysed from the perspective of ritual theory. The second part will focus on the potential for conflicts inherent in the ritual of erecting a trophy. Finally, it will be discussed, what made the *tropaion/tropaeum* attractive within a Roman context, particularly during Late Republican and Augustan times.

The first question that has to be addressed, however, is one of definition: What makes a *tropaion* a *tropaion*?[6] The most common form of the *tropaion*, persisting from the earliest examples to Late Antiquity, was that of an anthropomorphic figure consisting of a breastplate, helmet, shield and weapons affixed to the trunk of a tree.[7] Yet there is plenty of evidence, literary as well as archaeological, for monuments that were not anthropomorphic, but took the shape of piles of arms, columns, or tripods.[8] For example, in his description of the site of the battle of Marathon Pausanias states that next to the graves of the fallen soldiers "[a] trophy too of white marble has been erected."[9] Archaeological evidence shows

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4 Pritchett, 1974: 273; see Falkner, 1995: 121: "This battle was the Spartan's first naval victory of the war, and they were evidently proud of their achievement. They intended to extract the maximum propaganda from it, since their *tropaion* was visible to traffic in the straits."

5 For a similar approach, see now Kinnee 2018, reviewed by Foust 2019.

6 Rabe, 2008: 148 maintains that the decisive factor for a monument to be called a *tropaion* is its "Charakter als Kriegsbeute". Yet *tropaia* were by no means the only way to dedicate or display weapons or armour taken from the enemy (see Pritchett 1979a and 1979b). Furthermore, the Greek vocabulary for spoils of war was highly sophisticated (see Pritchett, 1991: 68–152). It is certainly correct that a *tropaion* was usually from spoils (σκῦλα or more frequently λάφυρα). However, the three terms were by no means congruent as Rabe herself observes (2008: 26–28). See also Kinnee, 2018: 11–17.

7 See Rabe, 2008: 22–25; Pritchett, 1974: 250.

8 See Rabe, 2008: 116–146.

9 Paus. 1,32,3-5: πεποίηται δὲ καὶ τρόπαιον λίθου λευκοῦ.

that the monument consisted of a column of the Ionic order, crowned by a statue of Nike and thus did not correspond to the anthropomorphic model.[10] The fact that Pausanias still calls it a *tropaion,* indicates that a definition based on formal aspects alone may not be sufficient.[11]And the Marathon trophy illustrates two further problems connected with the term *tropaion*, namely the fact that it is used in the sources for ephemeral as well as permanent and monumental signs of victory and for trophies that were erected immediately after the battle as well as years or even decades after the events they commemorated.[12]

Another approach has been to identify the primary function of the *tropaion*. On the basis of the literary and archaeological evidence, it has been argued that this function was a religious one, being either a votive offering for a specific god or goddess or even the tenement of the divinity that could be identified as Zeus Tropaios.[13] G. Charles-Picard maintained that every *tropaion* was a manifestation of the dedicating general's supernatural virtues, of his *tyche*, or *fortuna* in the Roman context.[14] Certainly it cannot be denied that the religious component played an important part in the process, as many *tropaia* were indeed dedicated to divinities like Zeus, Mars or Nike.[15] Yet as Pritchett has demonstrated, an approach that focuses exclusively on the religious aspects is insufficient for fully conceiving the concept behind the erection of *tropaia*.[16] Not all *tropaia* were dedicated to a certain divinity and one may therefore ask, if this was a necessary prerequisite or rather an additional aspect that could be emphasized under specific circumstances.

Thus, the battlefield trophy can neither be reduced to formal aspects nor to a supposedly religious meaning. Instead, the key for understanding

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[10] See Vanderpool, 1966; Beschi, 2002; Rabe, 2008: 101–104.

[11] Vanderpool, 1966: 106 suggested that the column bore a statue of Nike erecting a *tropaion* (see also Hölscher, 1998: 157). If this hypothesis is correct, Pausanias may have taken the *tropaion* proper as a kind of *pars pro toto* for the entire monument; against this see Rabe, 2008: 104.

[12] See Rabe, 2008: 2f.; Stroszeck, 2004: 303f.; Jacquemin, 2000: 64 contends that commemorative monuments like the Marathon column cannot be defined as *tropaia* since they were not raised immediately after the battle.

[13] Rabe, 2008: 19–22 with an overview of the older literature; see also Stroszeck, 2004: 309.

[14] Charles-Picard, 1957: esp. 24–35. Another approach is suggested by Meineck/Konstan, 2014: 175 who interpret the *tropaion* as „a means to confront the trauma of battle".

[15] See Pritchett, 1974: 275; Trundle, 2013: 136.

[16] Pritchett, 1974: 246–251.

this kind of victory monument has to be sought in its ritual context. As will be argued below, all the ritual acts and regulations connected to the *tropaion* set up an inextricable link between this specific symbol of victory, the specific space of the battlefield and the specific event of the battle. The combination of these three elements – ritual act, space and event – constitutes the *tropaion*, or rather, the battlefield trophy proper which forms the centre of the following considerations.[17]

The Greek *tropaion* – Ritual and Regulations

A ritual can be defined as a specific kind of performance, through which social communities display or even create a common understanding of central norms and values. At the same time, it may serve as an instrument to handle certain processes of transformation by setting them into a formal framework, as is shown for example, by rituals of initiation known from various ancient societies.[18] Rituals therefore disseminate explicit as well as implicit messages to the members of the community that perform them. S. Tambiah has emphasized that these messages (viz. the content of a ritual), are intimately linked to the form of the ritual.[19] Reconstructing the messages behind the act of raising a trophy therefore necessitates a closer look at the specific form of this ritual.

Xenophon attests that the act of erecting a trophy after the battle was preceded by a sacrifice and accompanied by a singing of the *paian*, a hymn also intoned when an army marched towards the enemy.[20] Thus, setting up a *tropaion* was explicitly marked as something extraordinary, an action that was not part of an everyday routine but connected to a very specific occasion. The trophy was erected at the spot where the victorious

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[17] This clarification is necessary, as there is evidence that votive offerings in sanctuaries like Olympia were sometimes also called *tropaia* and could even take an anthropomorphic form. However, as has rightly been emphasized in previous studies (see Rabe, 2008: 26–36; Trundle, 2013: 136f.), such dedications have to be distinguished from the trophy erected *on the battlefield* (see Soph. Trach. 751; Aischyl. Sept. 275–277 where the act of raising a trophy is distinguished from the dedication of spoils in a temple).

[18] Fischer-Lichte, 2003: 47; Michaels, 2001; Wulf / Zirfas, 2004.

[19] Tambiah, 1985.

[20] *Paian*: Xen. hell. 7,2,15, emphasizing that this was ὥσπερ εἰκός: "as was natural"; sacrifice: Xen. anab. 4,6,27. For the question if the *tropaion* was a votive offering related to the sacrifices taking place after a battle see Trundle, 2013: 136f.; Rabe, 2008: 19–22; Pritchett, 1979c: 186–189.

army "first engaged the enemy" or "where they had originally begun to advance".[21] Whether this was necessarily the spot where the enemy troops turned and fled, as has been maintained by ancient writers as well as modern scholars, is not completely clear in the sources.[22] Yet undoubtedly the *tropaion* marked the specific place on the battlefield where the victorious side – at least in their own view – had gained the upper hand in the course of the battle. Victory could thus be precisely located on the battlefield and its location was marked by the *tropaion*. The act of raising the trophy enabled an army or general to claim a victory by indicating the specific point where it had occurred.

Diodorus remarks that *tropaia* had to be made from perishable material, so that they would decay over time, and that it was forbidden to repair or restore them.[23] Plutarch wonders about the purpose of this rule:

> "Is it in order that men may believe that their repute deserts them at the same time with the obliteration of their early memorials, and may ever seek to bring in some fresh reminder of valour? Or is it rather that, as time makes dim the memorials of their dissension with their enemies, it would be invidious and malicious to restore and renew them?"[24]

The decay of the trophy would thus be equivalent to the ceasing of hostilities between the fighting parties. Modern scholarship has tended to deduce from this passage that trophies had to be made from wood, and that use of any other material was prohibited.[25] Yet again, by focusing not only on the trophy itself but also on the act of erecting it, a key point for understanding this rule emerges more clearly. Raising a trophy symbolized a claim to victory. If a *tropaion* was restored or even

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[21] Xen. hell. 4,2,23; 7,4,25.

[22] Rabe, 2008: 8f.; Pritchett, 1979a: 252f. See also Kinnee, 2018: 18–33.

[23] Diod. 13,24,5f.

[24] Plut. mor. 273c–d: Πότερον ἵνα τὴν δόξαν οἰόμενοι τοῖς πρώτοις συνεκλιπεῖν ἀεί τι πρόσφατον ὑπόμνημα τῆς ἀρετῆς ζητῶσι κομίζειν; Ἢ μᾶλλον ὅτι τοῦ χρόνου τὰ σημεῖα τῆς πρὸς τοὺς πολεμίους διαφορᾶς ἀμαυροῦντος, αὐτοὺς ἀναλαμβάνειν καὶ καινοποιεῖν ἐπίφθονόν ἐστι καὶ φιλαπέχθημον; οὐδὲ γὰρ παρ᾽ Ἕλλησιν οἱ πρῶτοι λίθινον καὶ χαλκοῦν στήσαντες τρόπαιον εὐδοκιμοῦσιν.

[25] See Pritchett, 1979: 258 who emphasized that this rule did not only pertain to battlefield trophies but to any dedication of weapons or armour, "whether applied to temples and stoas or fastened to the trophy stand." He concludes "that the conventions that the Greek world found odious concerned not so much the actual fabric of the trophy as any renewal or repair of it."

re-erected after a certain amount of time, this did not only concern the physical monument, but also and perhaps even more the ritual act. The restoration of a battlefield trophy so intimately linked with the place of victory might therefore be used in order to re-emphasize the claims of the victorious side by conjuring up the memories of the specific event.

At the same time, battlefield trophies were deemed inviolable, as was demonstrated by the Spartan king Agesilaos: Xenophon emphasizes that in 390 BC, Agesilaos did not destroy a trophy that had been erected by his opponent Iphicrates.[26] This story might be taken as evidence that the act of raising a trophy was not only a symbol for the claims of the victorious party, but could also be seen as a symbol of acknowledgement of defeat by the defeated themselves.[27] Indeed there are hints that seem to confirm this assumption: Thucydides and Xenophon mention the erection of trophies in connection with a truce that was made by both sides in order to receive the bodies of the fallen soldiers for proper burial.[28] This truce was usually asked for by the defeated party. The request indicated that the other side was in control of the battlefield and it has been inferred that this was also a prerequisite for the right to set up a trophy.[29] Although it has been questioned whether possession of the battlefield was a prerequisite for erecting the *tropaion* or rather an insight that derived from the fact that one side *did*

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[26] Xen. hell. 4,5,10: αὶ οὐκ ἐψεύσατο, ἀλλὰ τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ θυσάμενος ἦγε πρὸς τὴν πόλιν τὸ στράτευμα. καὶ τὸ μὲν τροπαῖον οὐ κατέβαλεν, εἰ δέ τι ἦν λοιπὸν δένδρον, κόπτων καὶ κάων ἐπεδείκνυεν ὡς οὐδεὶς ἀντεξῄει (see also Vitr. 2,8,15). See Stroszeck, 2004: 319f.

[27] See Rüpke, 1990: 201. Significantly, the *tropaion* could also be used to emphasize that defeat was not accepted. Thucydides reports that after a battle between Syracusans and Athenians in 414 BC either side set up a trophy, "the Syracusans […] both for the sea-fight and for the cutting off of the hoplites at the wall – the engagement in which they had captured the horses; and the Athenians set up a trophy for the fight in which the Tyrrhenians drove the Syracusan infantry into the marsh, and also for their own victory with the main body of the army." (Thuk. 7,54: Μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο Συρακόσιοι μὲν τῆς τε ναυμαχίας τροπαῖον ἔστησαν καὶ τῆς ἄνω τῆς πρὸς τῷ τείχει ἀπολήψεως τῶν ὁπλιτῶν, ὅθεν καὶ τοὺς ἵππους ἔλαβον, Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ ἥ τε οἱ Τυρσηνοὶ τροπῆς ἐποιήσαντο τῶν πεζῶν ἐς τὴν λίμνην καὶ ἧς αὐτοὶ τῷ ἄλλῳ στρατοπέδῳ.) In this case, neither of the opponents was ready to acknowledge defeat. Instead, both parties used the erection of a trophy to bolster their own respective interpretation of events.

[28] Thuk. 4,72; Xen. Ages. 2,15.

[29] Van Wees, 2004: 136; Stroszeck, 2004: 310. Pritchett, 1974: 259 maintained that "the one common factor in the erection of all trophies seems to have been the fact that the victor was the belligerent who routed, or put to flight […] his opponent, and hence was in possession of the battlefield."

actually erect it[30], one point should have become clear from the preceding considerations: The ritual raising of a trophy can be seen as a symbolic occupation of the battlefield as a specific place linked to a specific event. The battlefield, however, is by nature a highly contested space. Thus it should come as no surprise that the question of who occupied this space and had the right to erect a *tropaion* could be the starting point for renewed conflict.

The Dynamics of Ritual and the Potential for Conflict

Thucydides reports that, in 412 BC, the Milesians tore down a trophy mounted by an Athenian expeditionary force "on the ground that the Athenians did not have control of the country when they set it up."[31] This episode indicates an important aspect of rituals in general: Contrary to some definitions of rituals given in modern scholarship, they are not static and invariant entities.[32] Rather, rituals often prove to be highly dynamic and flexible with regard to changing political, social or other contexts that may shape their message. At the same time, even subtle alterations of the ritual sequence may change its meaning fundamentally.[33] This, in turn, can be used as an instrument for influencing the ritual's context and its underlying political or social conditions. In order to illustrate this point, the following considerations will focus on the events of Leuctra in 371, when a Theban army vanquished a Spartan and terminated Spartan hegemony in the Peloponnese.[34]

Usually, *tropaia* were raised after the battle. In a marked exception to this rule, the Thebans set up a trophy *before* the battle. According to Pausanias, the Thebans referred to a Delphic oracle predicting that they would defeat their enemy with divine help when a trophy was set up beforehand. The Thebans set "a trophy in a spot where it could be seen by the Lacedaemonians" and thus used the *tropaion* in order to demonstrate their confidence in a highly provocative way.[35] Yet they even went one

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[30] See Trundle, 2013: 132f.; van Wees, 2004: 138.

[31] Thuc. 8,24,1

[32] See Michaels, 2003.

[33] The complex of victory celebration and victory commemoration provides many examples for this aspect, as can for example be observed with regard to the Roman triumph (see Havener, 2016a).

[34] See Xen. hell. 6,4,1–15.

[35] Paus. 4,32,5f.: […] καὶ ἐκόσμησεν ἀπ᾽ αὐτῆς τρόπαιον, ὅθεν τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις ἔσεσθαι σύνοπτον ἔμελλεν. Due to this divergence from the usual procedure and to the

step further: shortly after they had crushed the Spartan forces they obviously erected a *tropaion* made from bronze, viz. from non-perishable material, and placed it on a monumental base.[36] The monument is not mentioned by Xenophon, but its remains have been found in the vicinity of the battlefield.[37] The base has been reconstructed by using the preserved parts of the original. In the middle of the pedestal on top of the base a circular hole has been carved out which would be suitable for the trophy mentioned by Cicero in his *de inventione*:

> "It was a nearly universal custom among the Greeks when they had fought with one another that the victors should set up a trophy in the country to commemorate the victory, but only for the time being, not that the record of the war might remain forever. The Thebans, having defeated the Lacedaemonians in battle, set up a trophy of bronze."[38]

Cicero goes on to record a fictitious dialogue between the Thebans and their adversaries who allegedly accused them "before the common council of Greece". According to Cicero, the principal point of contention between the two parties was the question whether the Thebans had the right to set up a permanent trophy for a victory over fellow Greeks.[39] Although Cicero's focus is not on the incident itself but rather on the "nature of justice" illustrated by this case[40], his use of this specific "case study" is highly significant when it is brought together with the messages of the *tropaion* ritual: As mentioned above, the term *tropaion* does not only apply to the ephemeral structures discussed in the first part of this article, but also to permanent monuments erected on battlefields. The evidence from Marathon, Salamis or Plataiai suggests that monumental *tropaia* were set up in parallel to the ephemeral trophies probably right from the

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fact that the monument could not have been composed from spoils Rabe argues that it cannot be termed *tropaion* (Rabe, 2008: 10).

36 The dating to a period close to the battle itself is based on the form of the clasps which link the blocks of the base; see Rabe, 2008: 131.

37 See Stroszeck, 2004: 321f. with further literature and Rabe, 2008: 129–132.

38 Cic. inv. 2,23,69: *Cum Thebani Lacedaemonios bello superavissent et fere mos esset Graiis, cum inter se bellum gessissent, ut ei qui vicissent tropaeum aliquod in finibus statuerent victoriae modo in praesentiam declarandae causa, non ut in perpetuum belli memoria maneret, äeneum statuerunt tropaeum.*

39 Cic. inv. 2,23,69–71.

40 See Gildenhard, 2011: 60.

outset of this practice.[41] The character and message of such permanent and monumental *tropaia* has to be seen in connection with the ritual act and its messages outlined above. Mounting a *tropaion*, be it ephemeral or permanent, symbolized the victor's claim to occupy the specific and highly contested space of the battlefield. A monument like the column at Marathon gave this claim a more comprehensive dimension: The claim that manifested itself in the ritual act of the erection was made literally permanent; the specific event was transformed into a lasting structure.[42] Such a far-reaching message might have been acceptable in a context like the Persian Wars, fought against a "barbarian" enemy.[43] When Greeks had fought against Greeks, as had been the case at Leuctra, a claim to permanent prevalence of one contestant over another could be subjected to severe criticism. Plutarch ends his considerations on the rule to build only ephemeral *tropaia* with the statement: "Nor among the Greeks […] do they that first erected a trophy of stone or of bronze stand on good repute."[44]

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[41] The respective *tropaia* are mentioned in literary sources several times either in combination (Plat. Min. 245 a5, Xen. an. 3,2,13; Plut. Aristides 16,5) or separately (Marathon: Aristoph. Equ. 1334; Vesp. 711; Lys. 285; Plataiai: Isokr. or. 14,59). See Rabe, 2008: 12–15. As Rabe emphasizes, the earliest evidence for *tropaia* from the 5th/4th centuries BC does not necessarily indicate that the practice of raising a trophy was invented at this time but rather that it was already in existence and well known in a Greek context (see Pritchett, 1974: 246 with recourse to the seminal study of Woelcke, 1911). That said, the question when this practice was actually introduced may not be answered with certainty. Whereas Charles-Picard, 1957: 22f. suggests an archaic date (contrary van Wees, 2004: 137f.), Trundle, 2013: 130–133 argues that the Greeks adopted the practice from the Persians in the course of the Persian Wars (see also Stroszeck, 2004: 309). Krentz, 2002: 32 maintains that the monumental trophies built at Marathon and Salamis pre-date the invention of ephemeral trophies. See also Kinnee, 2018: 50–55.

[42] See Stroszeck, 2004: 320.

[43] There is evidence, however, that in the aftermath of the battle of Plataiai a dispute occurred between Athenians and Spartans about who was entitled to set up the *tropaiaon*. According to Plutarch (Aristides 20,1–3) the issue was solved by both sides erecting separate trophies; see Rabe 106f.

[44] Plut. mor. 273d; see also Xen. hell. 1,2,9f. and Plut. Alcibiades 29,1f., where the erection of a bronze *tropaiaon* by the Ephesians after a victory over an Athenian force is used as an offensive argument by Alcibiades' men. Contrary Stroszeck, 2004: 313: "Lonis already argued convincingly that this 'rule' is an invention of the fourth century BC, when the unity of the Greeks became a major theme. He quoted a number of permanent trophies that had been erected at the end of the fifth and during the fourth century. The argument that there should be no permanent memorial of the inner-Greek quarrels, is

Given its compact form and dense symbolism, it is not surprising that the *tropaion* soon became a central element of what T. Hölscher called the "allegorical iconography" of public art and memory.[45] In addition to its ritual function and its close relation to the battlefield, the trophy became a universal symbol of victory that could be used in various contexts. On the reliefs of the temple of Athena Nike on the Acropolis of Athens, for example, *tropaia* appear together with the goddess of victory. As Hölscher has pointed out, the imagery of the temple celebrated the victorious history of the *polis* and the collective achievements of the citizens.[46] At the same time the *tropaion* could be used in order to emphasize the prowess and valour of individuals, as a funeral epigram from 4th century Attica demonstrates: "Nikoboulos, son of Mynnichos from Eitea. Many *tropaia* have been raised for your virtue in Hellas […]."[47] That this was an established practice from early on, may be inferred by Euripides' *Andromache*, where the poet picks up on this point in a satirical way: "Alas, what evil customs now prevail in Greece. Whenever the army sets up a trophy over the foe, men no more consider this the work of those who really toiled, but the *strategos* gets the credit for it."[48] Far from this satirical stance Xenophon praises the courage of his hero Agesilaos with the words:

> "When the enemy were willing to join battle with him, it was not by their panic flight that he won victory, but it was after overcoming them in stubborn fighting that he set up a trophy, leaving behind him imperishable memorials of his own valour, and bearing in his own body visible tokens

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obsolete, given the anathems dedicated for these victories in sanctuaries, like the Nike of Paionios, the painted versions of various battles or even the historical reports written by Thucydides and Xenophon describing every victory and every battle in detail. Consequently, if the victory achieved was an important one, permanent trophies may have been erected by Greeks over Greeks."

45 Hölscher, 2003: 15.

46 Hölscher, 1997; see also Charles-Picard, 1957: 48–64 as well as Rabe, 2008: 57–59 and 74–76.

47 IG II^2 6004: Νικόβολος Μυννίχο Εἰτεαῖος. σῆς ἀρετῆς ἕστηκεν ἐν Ἑλλάδι πλεῖστα τρόπαοα […]. The evidence for the use of the *tropaion* as a symbol of individual prowess has been collected by Pritchett, 1974: 273f.

48 Eur. Andr. 693-698: οἴμοι, καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ὡς κακῶς νομίζεται·ὅταν τροπαῖα πολεμίων στήσῃ στρατός, οὐ τῶν πονούντων τοὔργον ἡγοῦνται τόδε,ἀλλ' ὁ στρατηγὸς τὴν δόκησιν ἄρνυται,ὃς εἷς μετ' ἄλλων μυρίων πάλλων δόρυ,οὐδὲν πλέον δρῶν ἑνός, ἔχει πλείω λόγον.

> of the fury of his fighting, so that not by hearsay but by the evidence of their own eyes men could judge what manner of man he was. In truth the trophies of Agesilaus are not to be counted by telling how many he set up; the number of his campaigns is the number of them."[49]

Hellenistic kings also used the *tropaion* in order to promote their military success and the political power deriving from it.[50] The *tropaion* as a symbol of victory was thus detached from the specific space battlefield and implemented into wider contexts of victory presentation. As will be argued in the following section, this aspect of the semantics attached to the *tropaion* made it especially attractive in a Roman context. In Greece the establishment of close ties between the symbol of the trophy and the success of individual generals and rulers constituted a secondary development, the Romans obviously went the other way. Adopting the *tropaion* first in its symbolic form, at a certain point Roman generals began to restore – or rather: "re-invent" – the close connection between the trophy and the battlefield.

Roman *tropaea*

The battlefield trophy found its way into Rome relatively late.[51] The *tropaeum* made its first appearance as an iconographic symbol without any privileged connection to the specific place of the battlefield from the late

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[49] Xen. Ages. 6,2: ἔνθα γε μὴν ἠθέλησαν αὐτῷ οἱ πολέμιοι μάχην συνάψαι, οὐ φόβῳ τρεψάμενος νίκης ἔτυχεν, ἀλλὰ μάχῃ ἀντιτύπῳ κρατήσας τρόπαιον ἐστήσατο, ἀθάνατα μὲν τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ἀρετῆς μνημεῖα καταλιπών, σαφῆ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς σημεῖα ἀπενεγκάμενος τοῦ θυμῷ μάχεσθαι· ὥστ᾽ οὐκ ἀκούοντας, ἀλλ᾽ ὁρῶντας ἐξῆν αὐτοῦ τὴν ψυχὴν δοκιμάζειν. τρόπαια μὴν Ἀγησιλάου οὐχ ὅσα ἐστήσατο, ἀλλ᾽ ὅσα ἐστρατεύσατο δίκαιον νομίζειν.

[50] See Rabe, 2008: 87f. listing the numismatic evidence. Charles-Picard, 1957: 40–46 traces this development to the allegedly apotropaic function of the battlefield trophy: From an instrument to control evil spirits, the *tropaion* was transformed into a symbol of the victor's personal *arête*. This, in turn, allowed for the erection of permanent monuments as well as for the metonymic use of the *tropaion* in literature and imagery; for an opposite view see Jacquemin, 2000: 63.

[51] Modern scholarship is divided about the question whether there was a precursory custom comparable to the Greek ritual of raising a *tropaion*. Charles-Picard, 1957: 124–126 who draws an analogy between the early Greek *tropaia* and the Roman tradition of offering *spolia* and ascribes to both a primary apotropaic function. Indeed, the exposition of *spolia* constituted a prominent element of Roman celebrations and presentations

3rd century BC.[52] Coins issued between the late 3rd and late 2nd centuries BC, the so-called *victoriati*, depicted the goddess Victoria crowning a trophy on the reverse.[53] The *tropaeum* soon became a central element in Roman "triumphal art" with its omnipresent imagery of victory and success. As had been the case in Greece, the *tropaeum* could be used as a symbol in order to advertise the individual prowess of certain generals in the context of the fierce aristocratic competition that was characteristic of Roman politics, especially during the last decades of the Republic. Cassius Dio maintained, that on the signet rings of both Sulla and Pompey, *tropaea* were depicted.[54] One of the coin types that were issued in memory of Pompey's three celebrated triumphs also showed three *tropaea*.[55] In his third triumph, he, allegedly, even presented a trophy symbolizing his victory over the whole world.[56] The trophies that Julius Caesar erected in Rome were composed from weapons of all the enemies he had conquered.[57] *Tropaea* featured prominently in the decoration of temples as parts of reliefs, adorning public places in the form of marble statues or were depicted on various pieces of artwork. They could even become part

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of military victory (for the custom of affixing *spolia* to the exterior walls of a successful general see Rawson, 1990). Charles-Picard's approach, however, does not give sufficient credit to the fact that, in a marked contrast to the Greek ritual, the Romans did not establish a close connection of these spoils and the place where the battle had occurred. The *spolia* took their full effect only in the context of the city itself. Rüpke, 1990: 201, n. 10 doubts that the alleged tradition of affixing the armour of an enemy leader defeated by the Roman *dux* in a duel (the so-called *spolia opima*) to the trunk of an oak can be dated back into the regal period. He argues conclusively, that this supposedly archaic ritual was an "invention of tradition" from the Augustan era, made possible only by the existence of the Greek trophy and its absorption into the Roman context. Rüpke also emphasizes that the earliest literary sources for this custom date from the Augustan period. The *spolia opima* certainly gained high prominence during the Augustan era (see Havener, 2016b: 301–310 on the affair evolving around M. Licinius Crassus), which makes a deliberate construction of an archaizing aitiology plausible.

52 Rüpke, 1990: 201 connects the adoption of the *tropaion* as a symbol of victory with the direct military contacts between Rome and the armies of the Hellenistic kings, starting with the war against Pyrrhus (see also Charles-Picard, 1957: 102–105 and 137–163).

53 See Rabe, 2008: 86f.; Crawford, 1974: 628-630; Hölscher, 1967: 137.

54 Cass. Dio 42,18,3.

55 Crawford, 1974: nr. 426.

56 Cass. Dio 37,21,2; see Charles-Picard, 1957: 185–189; Hölscher, 1967: 149.

57 See Charles-Picard, 1957: 220f.; Hölscher, 1967: 151.

of a veritable "war of monuments"[58], as is shown by the trophies raised by Marius on the Capitol: Celebrating Marius' victory against the Cimbri they were subsequently torn down by his rival Sulla and later restored by Caesar in an equally symbolic act.[59]

The *tropaeum* was therefore a well-known and established symbol of victory in the city of Rome, when in the year 121 BC Domitius Ahenobarbus and Fabius Maximus won two battles against the Allobroges and the Averni in Gaul. The historian Florus reports how they celebrated their success:

> "The great joy caused by both these victories may be judged from the fact that both Domitius Ahenobarbus and Fabius Maximus set up towers of stone on the actual sites of the battles which they had fought, and fixed on the top of them trophies adorned with the enemy's arms. This practice was unusual with our generals; for the Roman people never cast their defeats in the teeth of their conquered enemies."[60]

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[58] Hölscher, 2015: 38; see also Hölscher, 2004: 88–96 and 2009: 169–177.

[59] Plut. Caesar 6; Suet. Iul. 11,2. See Hölscher, 2009: 172f.; Spannagel, 2003. Statues of Victories bearing *tropaea* also constituted a central element of the monument that the Mauritanian king Bocchus erected in memory of Sulla's part in the war against Jugurtha; see Hölscher, 1980: 357–371.

[60] Flor. 1,37,6: *Utriusque victoriae quod quantumque gaudium fuerit, vel hinc aestimari potest, quod et Domitius Ahenobarbus et Fabius Maximus ipsis, quibus dimicaverant, locis saxeas erexere turres, et desuper exornata armis hostilibus tropaea fixerunt, cum hic mos inusitatus fuerit nostris. Numquam enim populous Romanus hostibus domitis victoriam exprobravit.* This is also accepted by Charles-Picard, 1957: 107 and 148–163. By focusing on the monumental form of the *tropaea* rather than on their context, however, he loses sight of a crucial semantic aspect. It was the transfer of a symbol of victory known from the city of Rome itself into a new environment which made the acts of the generals so significant. This might also account for the alleged contradiction in Florus' text supposed by Charles-Picard, 1957: 106. In his description of the war against the Insubres (225-222 BC), Florus mentions that C. Flaminius raised a golden trophy made from the torques of the vanquished enemies (see Flor. 1,20,4: *Mox Ariovisto duce vovere de nostrorum militum praeda Marti suo torquem. Intercepit Iuppiter votum; nam de torquibus eorum aureum tropaeum Iovi Flaminius erexit.*) Whereas the *tropaea* raised by Domitius and Fabius are clearly marked by the term *locis*, the *tropaeum* allegedly erected by C. Flaminius is not distinguished in a similar way. If the *tropaeum* actually was erected, Florus' text gives no indication that this should not have happened in Rome. And since the *tropaeum* was an established symbol of victory, Florus might have simply used it in this form in order to highlight the significance of the victory.

Thus for the first time, according to Florus, Roman generals raised trophies *on the battlefield*. The historian's explanation, however, is not entirely satisfying. The Romans certainly had no qualms about demonstrating vanquished enemies that they had lost, for example by dragging their rulers or commanders through the streets of Rome in the triumphal procession. Therefore, in order to understand the significance of the act reported by Florus, it is important to emphasize again that the battlefield trophy obviously constituted a new form of celebrating military victory in the Roman context. Whereas in Greece the *tropaion* and its meanings were gradually detached from the exclusive link to the battlefield and transferred to other contexts, the Romans knew the *tropaeum* in its symbolic form long before they started to raise trophies on the battlefield proper. Before the victories of Domitius and Fabius most weapons captured from the enemy were usually burned on the battlefield, while some were spared for display during the triumph.[61] No other ritual acts occurred on the actual site of a battle. During the Republican era, therefore, the battlefield only played a minor part in the complex religious as well as political field of remembering military success. In the centre of Roman celebrations stood the ritual of the triumphal procession in the city of Rome.[62] Domitius and Fabius diverged from traditional practice in a highly significant way: For the first time in the Roman context, the *tropaea* raised by the two generals in 121, occupied the battlefield as a specific space. In view of its prior inferior position, it might even be maintained that this act created the battlefield as an "autonomous" space for remembering and celebrating military success in the first place.[63] The special quality of this space, that made it attractive in the eyes of a Roman general who tried to surpass the achievements of his peers, consisted in its singularity. Whereas the city of Rome was available to everybody as a stage, in order to promote one's military (and non-military) accomplishments, the battlefield itself could be occupied credibly only by the general who had fought successfully

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[61] See Rüpke, 1990: 199f. and Tagliamonte, 2016.

[62] See from the ample amount of recent literature on the triumphal ritual Itgenshorst, 2005; Beard, 2007; Östenberg, 2009.

[63] Contrary Kinnee, 2018: 61–104 contending that Roman trophies „loudly proclaimed ownership of conquered territories rather than victory in specific battles. As such, they were a Roman phenomenon: indeed, the crucial innovations of the Roman Republic and early Empire apparently were intended to shift the trophy from a battlefield marker to a statement of territorial claim on a massive scale [...]." (14)

on the spot. The battlefield trophy therefore constituted a very individual resource that could be used by Roman generals in the competition with their senatorial peers. It seems almost inevitable that this resource was exploited during the Late Republican era, hence in a time when competition got increasingly fierce and the protagonists were eager to find new ways to surpass their rivals and to deliberately test and even transgress the limits of the existing regulations.[64] The *tropaeum* was of course only one option among many that a successful general had at his disposal, one, moreover, with the distinct disadvantage of not being permanently visible in the city of Rome. Yet numerous examples from the last decades of the Republic, clearly demonstrate that generals deliberately chose to play this card in addition to their efforts of propagating their success at Rome itself and that they developed certain strategies in order to do so successfully.[65] The immediate monumentalisation of the trophy reported by Florus, may be seen as a first attempt in this regard[66], yet it was Sulla who fully exploited the potential of the battlefield trophy.[67]

After Sulla's victories over Mithridates of Pontos at Chaironeia and Orchomenos in 86 BC, two monumental trophies were raised on the battlefields advertising his success.[68] According to Plutarch, one of the monuments bore an inscription indicating "in Greek letters that Homoloïchus and Anaxidamus were the heroes of the exploit."[69] These remarks have been proved correct by the discovery of the remains of the *tropaeum*'s base and the respective inscription.[70] The other one "stands on the spot where the troops of Archelaus first gave way, by the brook Molus".

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[64] See for example the contributions in Hölkeskamp, 2009; Lange/Vervaet, 2014.

[65] Battlefield trophies were raised by Sulla (see Plut. Sulla 19; mor. 318d; Paus. 9,40,7), Lucullus (Plut. Lucullus 36,6; see Rödel-Braune, 2015: 302 [nr. S59]), Piso (Cic. Pis. 92), Pompey (Plin. nat. 3,18 and 7,96), Julius Caesar (Cass. Dio 41,24,3 and 42,48,2) and Augustus (Cass. Dio 51,1).

[66] Significantly, Fabius Maximus Allobrogicus is certainly much more known for building the *fornix Fabianus* in Rome.

[67] See Rüpke, 1990: 202: "Sulla führt das hellenistische Trophäenkonzept, das über die Markierung des Sieges hinaus auf eine Qualifizierung des Feldherrn zielt, in vollem Umfang ein."

[68] See Rödel-Braune, 2015: 295f. (nr. S52 and S53).

[69] Plut. Sulla 19,5: […] ἕτερον δέ ἐστι τοῦ Θουρίου κατὰ κορυφὴν βεβηκὸς ἐπὶ τῇ κυκλώσει τῶν βαρβάρων, γράμμασιν Ἑλληνικοῖς ἐπισημαῖνον Ὁμολόϊχον καὶ Ἀναξίδαμον ἀριστεῖς.

[70] See Camp, 1992: 444f.; Santangelo, 2007: 202–205.

Its remains have also been found a few years ago near Orchomenos.[71] Again according to Plutarch, "Lucius Cornelius Sulla Epaphroditus" dedicated both monuments to Ares/Mars, Victory, and Aphrodite/Venus "in the belief that his success in the war was due no less to good fortune than to military skill and strength."[72] His account has been confirmed by the inscription on one of the blocks of the new-found monument at Orchomenos which contains both Sulla's name (albeit without the epithet Epaphroditos) and the dedication to the three divinities.[73] G. Charles-Picard maintained that the trophies from Chaironeia and Orchomenos have to be seen as a symbol for Sulla's *Felicitas* and as an element of a new "theology of victory".[74] According to Charles-Picard, the victory at Chaironeia was presented as an epiphany of Sulla's divine favour as well as his exceptional charisma.[75] As modern scholarship has pointed out, the emphasis on Sulla's special charismatic qualities and his close connection to Venus as well as to Fortuna, certainly formed a crucial element of his self-representation – in a marked contrast to Roman tradition:

> "Scipio or Metellus had become Africanus or Numidicus because of something they had achieved; Sulla claimed to **be** *Epaphroditus* (or *Felix*, for that matter)."[76]

Yet contrary to Charles-Picard's conclusions, this did by no means entail a dissociation of the two trophies and the sites of battle.[77] At the

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[71] Plut. Sulla 19,5: ἀλλὰ τοῦτο μὲν τὸ τρόπαιον ἔστηκε τῆς πεδιάδος μάχης ᾗ πρῶτον ἐνέκλιναν οἱ περὶ Ἀρχέλαον παρὰ τὸ Μόλου ῥεῖθρον […]. The monument has been provisionally published by Kountouri/Petrochilos/Zoumbaki, 2018.

[72] Plut. Sulla 19,5: διὸ καὶ τοῖς τροπαίοις ἐπέγραψεν Ἄρῃ καὶ Νίκην καὶ Ἀφροδίτην, ὡς οὐχ ἧττον εὐτυχίᾳ κατορθώσας ἢ δεινότητι καὶ δυνάμει τὸν πόλεμον. For the name see Plut. mor. 318d and Plut. Sulla 34,3: […] καὶ παρ᾽ ἡμῖν ἐν τοῖς τροπαίοις οὕτως ἀναγέγραπται· ΛΕΥΚΙΟΣ ΚΟΡΝΗΛΙΟΣ 3ΣΥΛΛΑΣ ΕΠΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΟΣ.

[73] See Kountouri/Petrochilos/Zoumbaki, 2018: 363.

[74] See Charles-Picard, 1957: 170–181.

[75] For the potential and the limitations of the term "charisma" as an analytical category see Gotter, 2008.

[76] Santangelo, 2007: 212 who also underlines that, although the underlying concepts show evident similarities, the terms *Felix* and *Epaphroditos* are not completely congruent. They have to be seen in their respective Greek and Roman contexts (209–213).

[77] See Charles-Picard, 1957: 180f.: "[…] c'est que les dédicaces de Chéronée n'ont plus la valeur épisodique, sémantique, des monuments simplement commémoratifs : elles visent beaucoup moins à perpétuer le souvenir de la bataille qu'a symbolizer le pacte établi désormais entre l'*imperator* et le Destin." See also Kountouri/Petrochilos/Zoumbaki,

heart of the Sullan presentation of his success was the close connection between the victory as a kind of epiphany and the battlefield as the place where this epiphany had occurred. This specific thrust of Sulla's self-representation, which was based on a revaluation of the battle as an event and the battlefield as a specific space, required new media. Against this background, it is most revealing that Sulla chose the battlefield *tropaeum* in order to promote his new message. The *tropaea* raised by Domitius Ahenobarbus and Fabius Maximus had demonstrated that the battlefield might constitute a new resource within the sphere of aristocratic competition. Sulla consequently took up this idea and developed it into a crucial element of the presentation of military success. Immediately after his return to Italy, the *tropaea* became a central element of his coinage.[78] On the one hand and in accordance with the Roman tradition, the *tropaea* thus became a part of Sulla's political imagery in Rome. On the other hand, however, the monuments on the battlefields of Chaironeia and Orchomenos constituted a permanent point of reference that could be used only by Sulla himself in order to promote his special qualities that raised him high above his senatorial peers. At the same time it has to be emphasized that the concept of being *Epaphroditos* and *Felix* was primarily tailored to the needs of Sulla himself. Significantly (and again contrary to the considerations of Charles-Picard) future generals, although they used the *tropaeum* for celebrating their victories, developed different strategies in order to exploit the potential of the battlefield trophy.[79]

Thus, Pompey raised a monumental trophy in the Pyrenees in the wake of his campaign against the renegade Sertorius in Spain. According to Pliny the Elder, the inscription "testified that he had brought into subjection 876 towns between the Alps and the borders of Further Spain."[80] As the trophies at Chaironeia and Orchomenos this *tropaeum* was a highly visible

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2018: 364, emphasising that Sulla followed Greek tradition by erecting his trophies "at the exact sites where the battles took place".

78 RRC 359 discussed by Santangelo, 2007: 204–206 who stated that the importance of the trophies "was so great that Sulla referred to them on the first coin issue he ever produced, on his way back from the Greek East. They were the visual celebration of his crucial victory in the campaign for the reconquest of Greece." (206)

79 See Charles-Picard, 1957: 181.

80 Plin. nat. 3,18: […] *utpote cum Pompeius Magnus tropaeis suis quae statuebat in Pyrenaeo dccclxxvi oppida ab Alpibus ad fines Hispaniae ulterioris in dicionem ab se redacta testatus sit.*

symbol of success, towering above the Via Domitia.[81] Yet compared to Sulla, Pompey went a step further: He did not raise the trophy on a battlefield, but above the most important route from Spain to Gaul and Italy. Seen together with the inscription, this location clearly demonstrated that Pompey did not aim at occupying only one specific place in order to highlight his military prowess, but rather laid claims to the whole region he had allegedly pacified.[82] Whereas the battlefieldds of Chaironeia and Orchomenos constituted a resource that only Sulla could use in the arena of aristocratic competition, Pompey obviously considered the whole of Spain (and Southern Gaul) as a territory that he could lay exclusive claims to. Not long after the Romans had "discovered" the potential of the battlefield and begun to use the *tropaeum* in order to exploit it, the limits of this context were deliberately tested and expanded.

In combination with the other acts of deliberate transgression and provocation he repeatedly committed during his career, the *tropaeum* might have contributed to the negative attitudes displayed towards Pompey by some of his peers as well as by later historians.[83] It is plausible, therefore, that Caesar chose to follow a different track "because he understood that Pompey had gained no good name" for setting up his monumental trophy as Cassius Dio reports. In a marked contrast to his rival, Caesar did not raise a trophy during his activities in Spain but rather "erected a great altar constructed of polished stones not far from his rival's trophies."[84] This demonstrative act of distinction from Pompey fitted well into the strategy still pursued by Caesar

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[81] In analogy to Sulla's monuments Charles-Picard, 1957: 185f. interprets the *tropaeum* not only as a symbol but as the physical monument of Venus Victrix and thus of Pompey's charisma.

[82] Kinnee, 2018: 105–129 contends that such „landscape trophies" constituted a Roman innovation tailored to display imperial claims to conquered lands and shifted the focus of the trophy from the battlefield. As is argued here, however, it was precisely the „rediscovery" of the close connection between the *tropaeum* and the battlefield that constituted the background for Pompey's and Augustus' development of the trophy's function and meaning. In addition, the personal dimension of this way of presenting military success has to be emphasised. The trophies did not only display Roman imperial claims of conquest, but perhaps even more the individual general's claims of having achieved the victory.

[83] Pompey's *tropaeum* fitted into a pattern underlying his career as a whole; see Hölscher, 2004: 95f.

[84] Cass. Dio 41,24,3: ἐντεῦθεν δὲ διὰ τοῦ Πυρηναίου προχωρῶν τρόπαιον μὲν οὐδὲν ἐπ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἔστησεν, ὅτι μηδὲ τὸν Πομπήιον καλῶς ἀκούσαντα ἐπὶ τούτῳ ᾔσθετο, βωμὸν δὲ δὴ ἐκ λίθων ξεστῶν συνῳκοδομημένον μέγαν οὐ πόρρω τῶν ἐκείνου τροπαίων ἱδρύσατο.

at this point, which presented him as a victim of his enemies' machinations and as a fighter for the *libertas* of the *res publica*.[85] How dependent the use of the *tropaeum* was from the particular political circumstances is shown by the fact that Caesar gave up his restraint following his victory over Pompey and his party. After he had defeated king Pharnaces of Pontus "he set up a trophy to offset one which Mithridates had raised somewhere in that region to commemorate the defeat of Triarius." Dio's explanation that Caesar did not dare to tear down Mithridates' monument "because it had been dedicated to the gods of war" is qualified by the following remark that "by the erection of his own near it, he overshadowed and in a sense overthrew the other."[86] Caesar knew the potential of the battlefield trophy well and he exploited it when the circumstances appeared favourable.

The development of the battlefield trophy culminated (and was at the same time terminated in a certain sense) in the reign of the first Roman *princeps*. As the victory monument at Actium, numerous coin types, the trophy at Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges or the famous *Gemma Augustea* demonstrate, during his long reign, the first Roman *princeps* made ample use of the trophy as a universal symbol of victory in political imagery – thus fully in line with Late Republican "tradition".[87] Yet at the same time Augustus put the whole sphere of celebrating and remembering military success on a new footing – and his way of dealing with the *tropaeum* corresponds to the general patterns discernible in this regard.[88] This can

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[85] Caes. civ. 1,85; see Raaflaub, 1974: 241–252. Charles-Picard, 1957: 203 interprets the altar as a means to transfer Pompey's *felicitas* onto Caesar.

[86] Cass. Dio 42,48,2: καὶ τά τε λάφυρα πάντα, καίτοι πλεῖστα γενόμενα, τοῖς στρατιώταις ἐδωρήσατο, καὶ τρόπαιον, ἐπειδήπερ ὁ Μιθριδάτης ἀπὸ τοῦ Τριαρίου ἐνταῦθά που ἐγηγέρκει, ἀντανέστησε· καθελεῖν μὲν γὰρ τὸ τοῦ βαρβάρου οὐκ ἐτόλμησεν ὡς καὶ τοῖς ἐμπολεμίοις θεοῖς ἱερωμένον, τῇ δὲ δὴ τοῦ ἰδίου παραστάσει καὶ ἐκεῖνο συνεσκίασε καὶ τρόπον τινὰ καὶ κατέστρεψε.

[87] See Havener, 2016b: 111–113 and 122f. (Actium monument, see also Lange, 2016: 141–153); 127–132 (coinage issued after Actium); 222–225 (*Gemma Augustea*). The trophy at Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges has been analyzed in detail by Boube, 1996 (see also Charles-Picard, 1957: 270–273 and Cleary, 2011: 31–34). Although many questions as to the exact date of or the initiator for its erection (25 or 13/12 BC; local initiative or Augustan) cannot be answered with certainty, it is interesting that a monument celebrating the military prowess and the successes of the *princeps* was raised in an area that had already been occupied by the monuments of Pompey and Caesar.

[88] For the multiple and complex ways in which Augustus influenced and shaped the field of presenting military victory see Havener, 2016b.

be demonstrated by an analysis of one of the best known monuments from Augustan times, the *tropaeum Alpium* at La Turbie.[89] The monumental trophy was built in the years 7/6 BC in order to commemorate the successful campaigns, during which Tiberius and Drusus conquered the tribes of the Alpine region, a decade earlier.[90] It consisted of a square plinth, a rotunda surrounded by columns and a stepped conical roof, crowned by a statue of the *princeps*. The plinth bore an inscription, flanked by two proper *tropaea*, of which more than 150 fragments have survived and which has been reported (with some minor variations) in Pliny's *Natural History*:

> "To Imperator Caesar Augustus, son of the divine [Julius Caesar], 14 times *imperator*, in the 17th year of his *tribunicia potestas*, the Senate and People of Rome erected [this monument], because under his command and his auspices all the peoples of the Alpine region stretching from the Adriatic Sea to the Mediterranean were subjected to the *imperium* of the Roman people."[91]

At first sight, the Augustan monument appears to correspond with Pompey's monumental trophy in the Pyrenees: the *tropaeum Alpium* was not raised on an actual battlefield, but rather above a central route from Italy to Gaul. Its inscription featured a long list of conquered tribes, this time from the Alpine region. Thus, the La Turbie monument may be seen as an impressing symbol for Augustus' claims of supreme command and military success. One element of the monument's message, however, constituted a marked difference not only to Pompey's trophy but actually to every monument discussed so far in this article: the dedication by the Senate and People of Rome. G. Charles-Picard interpreted the *tropaeum Alpium* as a shrine or *heroon* for the *Genius Augusti*. According to him, the *princeps* took the part of the divine recipient that every *tropaion* addressed – Augustus became the *theos tropaios*.[92] Against the background of the

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[89] See Casimir, 1932; Formigé, 1949; Lamboglia, 1976; Kinnee, 2018: 115–118.

[90] See Kienast, 2014: 357–359.

[91] Plin. nat. 3,20,136f.: *Imperatori Caesari Divi filio Augusto / pont(ifici) max(imo) imp(eratori) XIIII trib(unicia) pot(estate) XVII / senatus populusque Romanus / quod eius ductu auspiciisque gentes Alpinae omnes quae a mari supero ad inferum pertinebant sub imperium p(opuli) R(omani) sunt redactae / gentes alpinae devictae* […]; see CIL V 7871 and Arnaud, 2005.

[92] Charles-Picard came to this conclusion although he noticed this unusual aspect of the dedicatory inscription (1957: 295f.). Furthermore, due to his overall conception of "la croyance à une grâce surnaturelle possédée par l'Empereur" (1957: 232) as the crucial foundation of Augustus' rule Charles-Picard maintained that the *tropaeum Alpium* was

preceding considerations, however, it can be argued that the monument at La Turbie aimed at something completely different. As the monumental trophies erected by Sulla or Pompey, the Augustan *tropaeum* symbolized the claims of a victorious general: Augustus made it entirely clear that by his success (or, rather, by the success of the general who had acted on his behalf) he occupied not only one specific battlefield, but a whole region. Yet whereas Sulla, Pompey, and all the other generals of the Late Republican period (as well as their Greek precursors) had to make these claims by and for themselves, the La Turbie inscription demonstrated that the Senate and People of Rome acknowledged and even approved of Augustus' claims. For decades the *tropaeum* had been an instrument within the aristocratic competition for military glory and political power. It had constituted a means to occupy symbolically as well as physically a specific space, namely a battlefield or even a larger area like the Iberian Peninsula. This specific space could then be employed within the public discourse as a prominent point of reference at the exclusive disposal of the successful commander. In combination with other elements, like the triumphal ritual or victory monuments in the city of Rome, the *tropaeum* could thus bolster a general's claim to the highly valuable resource of supreme and (if possible) indisputable military success. By officially commissioning the trophy of La Turbie, the members of the senate acted as donors of a monument that ostentatiously dispossessed them of this resource that had been absolutely crucial for aristocratic competition in Republican times.[93] The *tropaeum Alpium* may thus be seen as an impressive symbol of the new order, in which all military success eventually belonged to the *princeps*.[94] This example determined the history of the *tropaeum* for the centuries to come. From one of many resources within the aristocratic competition on honour, prestige and political power, it was made into a symbol of the imperial monopoly on military success.

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a universal monument celebrating Augustan success in general (1957: 297f.). However, the inscription clearly indicates that the monument occupied a specific space.

[93] The inscription therefore was much more than a mere expression of the *consensus universorum* (see Arnaud, 2005: 96).

[94] A similar pattern can be observed, for example, in the case of the *Fasti Triumphales* that were attached to the Parthian arch on the Forum Romanum (see Havener 2019).

In conclusion to this analysis of the battlefield trophy in Greece and Rome, one particular point has to be emphasized: In Greece, raising a trophy was a forceful way for one side to claim the battlefield and thus supremacy over the defeated enemy. Only the subsequent disentanglement of the trophy and the battlefield made it possible to use the *tropaion* as a universal as well as an individual symbol of victory. In Rome, it was precisely this aspect of celebrating individual success that made the *tropaeum* attractive for Late Republican generals. Significantly, in order to exploit the full potential of this symbol, they had to establish a connection between trophy and battlefield that had not existed so far in the Roman context. A comparison of the Greek and the Roman way to deal with the *tropaion* thus demonstrates, how the same ritual with its forms and meanings, can be adapted to various contexts according to their particular requirements.

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Introduction: "War and Civilians"

Oliver Stoll

The panel "War and Civilians" laid emphasis on different ways in which civilians, that is to say non-combatants, were affected by military operations and also how they suffered from the consequences of war. A whole range of topics would have been of interest here and worth being studied – among others mass executions, enslavement, deportations and forced migrations, flight, also looting, war crimes, sexual violence, acts of cultural and religious destruction, destruction of economic structures and livelihoods. Warfare in the ancient world clearly was extremely brutal; violence, murder, rape were almost routine.[1]

Without any doubt during antiquity war and its impact on the fighting men and also the non-combatants – the women, the children, the aged people – was an ever-present reality.[2] War was frequent, lasted long and even longer since the 5th century BCE and the so called Peloponnesian War, sometimes called a "World War of Antiquity", and played a more prominent role in the life and thought for citizens and political communities.[3] Thucydides' proverb of "war as a violent teacher" (Thuc. 3,82,2: βίαιος διδάσκαλος) and even the earlier Heraclitus "war is both king of all and father of all" (Diels / Kranz 22, Frgm. B 53: Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστί, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς …) are an eternal truth, because war in more than one aspect has an impact on men and society. The impact of war was always present, sometimes more intense and direct, sometimes nearly hidden. War affected the fighters and the survivors of battle, their

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1 Goldsworthy, 2016: 379.

2 Raaflaub, 2014: 15–46, especially on p. 15 and also Sidebottom, 2008: 36–40.

3 The Peloponnesian War as „World War" cf. for example Bleckmann, 2016: 8. For the changes in warfare during and after this war see Karavites, 1984: 163 and especially Burckhardt, 2016: 47–51. For communication on war and violence and their instrumentalization cf. for example Zimmermann, 2009. Cf. also Raaflaub, 2001: 307–356, here p. 313.

family and the whole community. War in antiquity was brutal and war was without any limits:[4] Its target was the whole enemy community, and sometimes it could be fought out until the opponent was physically and politically destroyed. The palette of *ius belli*, the law of war, reaches from genocide and enslavement to incorporation and restitution. War as a social catastrophe, defining and determining one's own and personal fate, was a reality of life, reflected in so many pieces of ancient literature from Homer's *Iliad* as an epic about war and its effects on those who fight him and those who suffer[5] (the Trojan War at the very start of European literature with the destruction of a city and the annihilation of its entire population being a story of genocide indeed) to Vergil's *Aeneid* painting a vivid picture of the brutal realities.[6] Almost all Greek authors deal with war and its impact, intensely and directly or not, but war definitely is an ever-present reality – it is prominent! Especially historiography from its beginning in Herodotus and Thucydides with their great histories of the Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian War, is the description of war and warfare[7] and its influence on policy, society – as especially in the case of Thucydides and his masterpiece, the "pathology", the lessons of war following the Corcyraean Stasis (Thuc. 3,70–85, esp. 3,82–84), which is some kind of a starting point for describing the brutal effects of years of warfare[8]. War pervades the life and thoughts of all participants and all who suffer it. It reveals strength and weakness of institutions and the

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4 Ziegler, 1998: 45–66, p. 46; also cf. Wheeler, 1988: 8.

5 Compare for example Gehrke, 2006: 13–29, esp. p. 17–19, 20. The Trojan War as the story of a genocide: van Wees, 2016: 20–21, 22.

6 James, 2013: 98–115, here p. 108 on this and other "blood–spattered" foundation myths of Rome; Ziegler, 1998: 47. The Trojan War a genocide: van Wees, 2010: 239–240.

7 Maier, 1987: 7. The entire *historia perpetua* as „Kriegsgeschichte": D'Huys, 1987: 209–250, p. 210; compare p. 215 on Isocrates, *Ad Nicoclem*, who claims that writers, who want to be succesful with the public should write „nice stories", agreeable to eye and ear: namely about games and war (Isocr. or. 2,48–49)!

8 Will, 2015: 31–34, 166–170 and especially p. 206–210. See also Raaflaub, 2014: 18f., also cf. Raaflaub, 2016: 55–59 for war, politics, polarization and radicalization. Compare Thuc. 1,76: There is pride on the Athenian side in their moderation while defending the empire before the Spartans on the eve of the Peloponnesian War – this moderation obviously did not survive the outbreak of the war for very long! For an outburst of brutality and a rising tide of violence during the Peloponnesian War, this war being a turning point for the thought about war and the starting point for a permanent breakdown of the restraints on war s. Kern, 1999: 152.

cohesion of communities and their culture. Indeed it is πόλεμος, not civil war or *stasis*, that Thucydides brings to life as the βίαιος διδάσκαλος (Thuc. 3,82,2), and he describes changes that are undergone not just by individuals within cities suffering *stasis*, but afflicting αἵ τε πόλεις καὶ οἱ ἰδιῶται generally. Thucydides' thesis, the unprecedented power of his war, is demonstrated in its ability to destroy first civic identity and then a state's mental and physical capacities; his omnipotence is obvious in polarization, radicalization, demographic shifts: We are not talking of the fighting men alone, we are talking about whole societies and their eventual transformation in connection with war.

On the other end of the scale there are, of course, antiheroic tendencies and there is the search for peace, there always is a strong desire for peace, that pervades ancient literature too: Especially in the second half of the fifth century and ever since, concerns about war (external and internal) as the thing, that brings people the greatest harm, which causes defeat and slavery, and peace in its fundamental importance for the well-being of human society and community, are together and as structuring principle not only in literature ever-present, once again starting with Herodotus and Thucydides. Some Greek philosophers, the Sophists, thought about possibilities of avoiding war and securing peace, some like Plato and Aristotle searched for responsible use and control of war, which they both considered deeply ingrained in human society, in their ideal state.[9]

War and its needs have been and continue to be the major activity determining political and social organization, also economy of course. Military preparations and organization have been central to the internal structure of human communities. War is in a very fundamental sense connected with societies, basic to state organization and also for the definition of the individuals' place within this frame be that warriors or civilians/ families. One's own army and the allies could be and were responsible for the security, power, prosperity of the *polis* and the people. Defeat could be totally devastating and more than bitter, survival depending on the will of the victors or the gods. The impact of war on those who were soldiers and the noncombatant population is a very important and

[9] "Peace", the Sophists, Plato and Aristotle – see for example Raaflaub, 2009: 225–250, esp. p. 227–236, then p. 236–238 for a wider perspective on the idea of peace in other Mediterranean societies; for "the antiheroic" compare Scodel, 2008: 233: "*The anti-heroic, then seems to be as old in Greek as the heroic, and it persistently reappears*". Compare van Wees, 2001: 233–247 and van Wees, 2009: 25–43.

multifaceted topic, all too often it escaped the attention of scholarship. Military exploits are highly esteemed in every society; distinction in battle and war opens the way to promotion within the social hierarchy. It almost certainly has economic effects too, that reach within the civilian society, into the family of the "heroes": benefits from booty, land grants, social esteem. By the way, this is one of the reasons why women are frequently pushed to the periphery in most mainstream historiography: they are non-combatants and do not take active part in one of the most highly valued and honorable pursuits, namely the fighting itself.[10]

Thus the effectiveness of equating a feared and despised enemy with a woman, a cliché that not only litters ancient literature, but is a generally prevailing attitude. Not only in ancient historiography the women, children and aged people for the most time join on the unheroic and hence unsung margins of history[11]. War also reaches into the life of the families in other ways: What about losing fathers and sons, what about the war dead – even if honored with elaborate rituals and a state burial[12] – and what about cripples, war invalids:[13] How did a society deal with this challenges, mentally and also economically? What about the fears and insecurity of families and wives, not knowing about the fate of the beloved fathers and husbands fighting somewhere,[14] maybe already lying somewhere

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[10] Kuhrt, 2001: 1–25, esp. 1, 2, 3f. 6.

[11] Unsung margins of history: Kuhrt, 2001: 3f. War's impact on women and families cf. Raaflaub, 2014: 32–35.

[12] For example: Raaflaub, 2001: 320–322, 326 and also Raaflaub, 2014: 24–25.

[13] Raaflaub, 2014: 26–28 and Raaflaub, 2016: 49–51.

[14] A fine example for the fear of a woman while her husband is at war (and also for the fear of his mother): CJP 2,438 and 442, two documents from the Apollonios–Archive from Hermopolis, written during the Jewish revolt in Egypt (115–117 AD). Although Apollonios, who was the *strategos* of the Apollonopolite Nome at that time, was no "real soldier", he went to war at the head of a local militia against the Jewish rebels: The mother Eudaimonis threatens the gods not to pay attention to religion "until I get my son back safe" (CJP 2,442), and his wife, Aline, is worried about her husband very much and feeling even worse: She writes that she has pleasure neither for food nor for drink since Apollonios left and also, that she is not able to sleep, instead staying awake night and day with anxiety about his safety (P. Giss. 1,19,3–9)! In CJP 2,438,1–6 we are reminded that the economic situation of a family naturally could already change during the conflict in many ways: Here Eudamonis complains about the scarcity of labour during the war (also scarcity of labourers – because the men were away), she talks about the damage to the fields and the villages, the consequences for trade and the lack of food supplies – interesting insights into different disasters of war and their repercussions for

wounded or dead on the bloody battlefields or vanished in captivity,[15] as prisoners of war? What about the life of widows and orphans,[16] being expected to keep calm and carry on, to bear children and raise further sons for war and as potential warriors as a sort of social reproducer[17] – being forced to support war efforts, and also being exposed to different kinds of the social and economic repercussions of massive casualties? What about the trauma (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)[18] that not only belong to psychologically destroyed soldiers and veterans, who were directly confronted with war's brutality in battle, who killed and tried to avoid being killed, but also to the women and families.[19] What about them all suffering in person from the atrocities of warfare in situations like the siege and the storming of their city,[20] hunger, fear and panic, the following plundering and the violence through the hands of the victors, maybe some kind of terror and massacre (mass executions without distinction of gender or age[21] are widely attested, unlimited – almost nihilistic – violence) or

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the life of families and local communities. Compare also Aristophanes' Lysistrata (Lysistr. 589–593) who complains for "sleeping alone", sending out children and husbands: Schaps, 193: 206f. for the loneliness, the fears of women and economic suffering from war–situations, destruction and plundering.

15 For captivity cp. for example Panagopoulos, 1978**;** Bradley, 2004: 298–318 and Ducrey, 1999: 63–81; Rüpke,1999: 83–98.

16 Raaflaub 2016: 51–52.

17 Once again cp. Lysistrata (Aristoph. Lysistr. 589–503): women suffer in a double share, first they bear children and then they have to send them out as soldiers!

18 For example view the different papers in Meineck / Konstan, 2014, espec. Raaflaub, 2014: 15–46.

19 Of course sometimes women did some fighting too (throwing stones and tiles from the rooftops) – during the siege of their city for example, or at least they (and sometimes children too) were engaged in logistical matters like providing and transporting ammunition and armor, food, drink, caring for the wounded, even helping to repair walls. Some examples in Schaps, 1982: 194–195; more in Stoll, 2008: 20–51 passim, pointing also at the stratagem–literature (Frontin and Polyainos) with many examples.

20 For the *urbs direpta* s. Ziolkowski, 1993: 69–91. Cf. also Levithan, 2013. For Greece see Lee, 2010: 138–162 and Schaps, 1982: 202–206; for an overview of all aspects cf. Kern, 1999; for the Ancient Near East see Wright, 2015: 147–166.

21 Compare the famous incident in Tac. Ann. 1,51: the massacre of Germanic people by the troops of Germanicus in 14 AD ("… *non sexus, non aetas miserationem attulit* …"). Further examples Ziegler 1998: 48–49. For an example of killing the people of a sacked city without distinction of gender and age from the "Persian front" in Late Antiquity see Amm. Marc. 24,4,35.

even genocide[22] as calculated military tactic, the deliberate elimination of women and children by the victor (Cass. Dio 77,15,1[23]) and also that of animals as the Romans often did: an instrument of terror, to raise fear and destroy any will to resist (Polybios 10,15,4–7[24]) or even their own heroic mass-suicide (attested not only in Masada at the very end of the First Jewish Revolt: Ios. Bell. Iud. 7,389–406[25]), then the future fate of slavery, deportation[26] or the cruel condition of being a refugee? This last phenomenon is of course in our present days of the 21th century, with a barely manageable huge "refugee crisis", one of the impacts of war on noncombatant people, that comes to mind very fast.[27] And what about being subjected, your former life destructed and also parts of your former identity and emotions; constitution and religion, economy all changed, and even though – if by luck and the commanders in the fields' decision, than, in a second step by ratification of the Senate in a further step – there is an act of restitution, you're integrated into new political and/ or social

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[22] For genocide in antiquity cp. van Wees, 2010: 239–258, for the annihilation of cities esp. p. 243–247 and also see van Wees, 2016: 19–37, esp. p. 31: genocide carried out for a calculated political effect, as a means of intimidation.

[23] Ziegler, 1998: 47: Septimius Severus giving order to his soldiers even to massacre the unborn boys and their pregnant mothers in the eve of his *expeditio Britannica*. 'Cutting open pregnant women' as rhetoric of genocide with a long tradition, going back to the Near East: van Wees, 2016: 21–24. See also Kuhrt, 2001: 6–8.

[24] Ziegler, 1998: 48f. 50–53; see also Gilliver, 1996: 222, 226. Compare the rhetoric of slaughtering people 'like animals': Amm. Marc. 16,11,9 (357 AD).

[25] For a whole range of examples s. Volkmann, 1990: 10, 16, 47ff. 54, 63, 65, 68, 83, 120f. 152. Compare also Schaps, 1982: 200–202 for other examples of suicidal heroism, for example the slaughtering, burning, hanging, throwing themselves into wells and off the rooftops, children and wives included, by the citizens of Abydos when Philip V. sacked the town at the very end of the 3rd century BCE (Polybios 16,30–34).

[26] For slavery and deportation compare Ziegler, 1998: 53–58 and especially Volkmann, 1990. Deportation: Kehne, 2002: 229–243 and Kettenhofen, 1996: 298–308 s.v. Deportations II. Of course there could have been flight and ordered evacuation before the final destruction: for some examples for evacuation s. Schaps, 1982: 198–199.

[27] For example Oltmer, 2012; Oltmer, 2016: 8 for a typology of "Gewaltmigrationen", forced migration. Compare also Bessel / Haake, 2011. Unfortunately "standard European migration history" is highly selective in many aspects: one of them is the neglect of studies on ancient history, not to say on nearly all historical processes before the Industrial Revolution. Compare for example Lucassen / Lucassen, 2013: 52–63, esp. 52, 53 and then on 57–58 (forced migration). For antiquity for example: Raaflaub, 2001: 320–322, 326 and also Raaflaub, 2014: 29–30.

systems,[28] that of the victor? That kind of "*clementia*" would have a bitter taste of defeat and be a mild form of slavery and also the nucleus of future resistance.[29] War could have a variety of effects on the demography of a community: sometimes horrendous losses – not only for the loser of the conflict –, sometimes, when you are the victor, population increase, prosperity and economic growth, structural changes, influx of population from the hinterland or even from abroad.[30]

And it also would be interesting to think a little bit more about that civilians and non-combatants (or should we call them "regimental" or "army-societies") who don't stay at home, but follow armies to the margins of the battlefields as camp followers in the widest sense of meaning, from slaves and servants to prostitutes and wives, traders and surgeons[31]. What about their contributions to any war efforts, also in production processes and economic matters connected with the feeding of the army and the repairing of arms and armour or the necessary clothing? This phenomenon is not restricted to Roman armies as one might think.[32]

Women and families, civilians are involved in war as much as men and fighters, the study of war and battle, military history provides a fruitful avenue for exploring civilians and the impact of war on the civilian society, there is something to find beyond the battlefields! War is more than a mere military conflict, in many aspects there is a symbiosis between war and society or societies, a complex and complicated interrelationship of war, politics, society, economy, culture and religion. A broad view

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[28] Social change and military history s. Kühne / Ziemann, 2000: 9–46, esp. 36ff. and also Nowosadtko, 2002: 154ff.; cf. Schild / Schindling 2009. For the character of a *deditio* to Rome and its consequences for the defeated: Ziegler, 1998: 60–62 and also De Libero, 2012: 34–35: *deditio* is absolute, total, unconditional, a juridical self–destruction (Polybios 36,4).

[29] For effects of war on society s. for example Phang, 2011: 105–144, esp. p. 117–118. The bitter taste of *clementia* – compare: De Libero, 2002: 18, 20; esp. 22–23 (*clementia* as political instrument). For the 'roman mixture' of *clementia* and brute force (remember Vergils' "*parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*" in Aen. 6,853) cf. also Ziegler, 1998: 64.

[30] Cf. Raaflaub, 2014: 23f. for casualty figures and demographic changes, also cf. Raaflaub, 2016: 47–48 and also see p. 52–55 for a brief study on war and structural changes in classical Athens.

[31] For examples s. Stoll, 2006: 217–344; Stoll, 2008: 20–51. Important: James, 2002: 42–43: "regimental communities", "military garrison–communities".

[32] For example compare Loman, 2004: 34–54; Loman, 2005: 346–365. See also Kuhrt, 2001: 1–25, esp. 11–12.

on the subject, a more sophisticated conceptual framework is helpful to understand essential questions of human history: why wars were fought, why and how they ended,[33] what effects war had on the participants and historical societies – military history benefits from questions on military and civic culture and their history.

What we did in this panel, if I may be allowed to say so, was a very fine example for a – let me call it "revised new military history" way of looking at battles, wars and warfare, a research agenda, that in breadth and sophistication seems to have a great deal of appeal to broader segments of the profession. It is not the 'old school' look of 'war history', a traditional operational history, analyzing warfare, strategy, battle and battlefields, telling stories of glory and shame, in a fashion sometimes called "drums and trumpets"[34]. It is not the – a little more modern and still influential – look at soldiers and commanders and the "face of battle"[35]. It is not exactly the "war and society" scholarly starting point, that was once called "new military history" [36] and now already is an integral part of the profession of military historians, namely the one seeking the connection between armies and societies, but without too much of particular interest in warfighting as such, interested in everything about war except campaigns and battles!

A revised version of "new military history" means to have a look at "the other face of battle", "the repercussions of battles, famine and destruction on the civilian population during the same […] and, after it is over – when civilians flee as refugees or become prisoners of war or deportees"[37], but without avoiding analysis of operations, campaigns, battles, weapons and tactics. It is an attempt to provide a wholesale picture of the "Impact of War" on societies[38] – warriors, armies and soldiers are definitely parts of functioning societies! The aim of this "revised new military history" must be to look on the mutual relationships between war and its contexts, the effects of war on society and the effects of society on war. "Big pictures" are needed, on political and institutional contexts, social and

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[33] For example Afflerbach / Strachan, 2012; Afflerbach, 2013.

[34] For the different "modes" of military history compare Kühne / Ziemann, 2000: 9–46, also for a positioning of military history as a historical science; Citino, 2007: 1070–1090.

[35] The title of the schools' classic: Keegan, 1976.

[36] "New Military History" explained: Black, 2004 and Morillo, 2013.

[37] Nadali / Vidal, 2014: 2; cf. Kuchler, 2013: 168–176.

[38] Black, 2004: 26ff. and Morillo, 2013: 4f.; cf. also the preface to Morillo / Black/ Lococo 2009: IX–XI.

economic contexts, cultural contexts. Not to be ignored are detailed studies on orphans and widows, veterans and prisoners of war, or inquiries analyzing the persistence or overthrow of social and political orders, the manner in choosing to memorialize historical events or to forget them, the remembering of victory or defeat[39], contemporary cultural values connected with wars and warriors, the construction of identity through war and many more challenging topics. One also could think about special studies on the visualization of war in art and also in literature, analyzing how and why people write about war – a look at the production process of 'history' by looking at the generation of memory.

This kind of focus on the "impact of war" is rather modern, you also could call it an anthropological perspective on warfare and society[40] and the effect of war on society, an inquiry into military history that applies methods and trends of the history of memory and culture,[41] too – warfare and the history of warfare in every particular era is related to its own unique cultural discourse (assumptions, perceptions, expectations, values of the particular society about war and warriors – this is a real "*cultural turn*" in military history![42]). Maybe you already could call that revision of the once "new military history" a "*complete picture military history*"[43] – a discipline with a strong interest in social and cultural analysis with an equal commitment to battlefield and campaign, to war and society, to the impact of war and other agenda, a merging of different historical perspectives, a research agenda that should and will have a much bigger deal of appeal to even broader sections of the professional circles of historians!

With the four papers and contributions in the panel on "War and Civilians" of course we certainly scarcely scratched the surface of the problems and themes in this field of military history and the entire range of the topic; no real "analysis" of the problems "beyond the battlefields" and on the "impact of war" was possible. Much more could have been said and something more of that, what could have been said and asked, indeed

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[39] View for example the papers in Meier / Stoll, 2016.

[40] Otto / Thrane / Vandkilde, 2006 is in many articles a good example for this look on warfare.

[41] Military history recognizing the determining role of culture in military affairs: s. Lipp, 2000: 212–227. Cf. Shy, 1993: 13–26 and also Lynn, 1997: 777–789.

[42] "Cultural turn": Kortüm, 2010: 30–31.

[43] I took this expression from Citino, 2007: 1081 who cited it in another connection, s. also p. 1086, 1089.

was touched upon in the lively discussion which followed the papers. Even if incomplete – nevertheless I would say, it was worth a try.

Our speakers covered a historical span of time from the Late Bronze Age to Late Antiquity and presented insights in "War and Refugees in the Ancient Near East during the Late Bronze Age"; "War on Women: Arabian Queens in the Neo-Assyrian Empire", the "Welfare Services for Disabled Veterans and Surviving Dependents in Classical Athens" and "Recruits and Deserters – How War affects Civilians in the Late Roman Empire" – thereby some of the most important aspects of the subject, how civilians, non-fighting people, were affected by war operations and how they suffered from the consequences of war, were touched upon at least!

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"Run for your lives!" War and Refugees in the Ancient Near East during the Late Bronze Age*

Josué J. Justel

Introduction

Not a day goes by when the news does not speak of the refugee crisis that has lasted for several years. In the current case, that crisis has been caused by a number of factors, but the most significant appear to be political instability in the Near East (Syria and Iraq), the civil war, and the existence of armed terrorist groups. The phenomenon is not a rare one; throughout history, we know much of such population flows, with similar characteristics. I do not have to go very far to state that Europe experienced a huge refugee crisis before, during, and after the Second World War; during the civil wars in several Latin American countries (Cuba, El Salvador) millions of people wound up living as refugees, especially in the USA; and that type of phenomenon has been the usual state of affairs for decades in the countries of Central Africa. All those cases follow common patterns (see Betts, 2009). In the areas of origin exist armed conflicts, which led to persecution "on account of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group" (*Refugee convention*, 1951). The population moves to safer, richer areas. In addition, they create logistics problems in host countries; a right of return is foreseen, as well as a right to non-refoulement.

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* University of Alcalá, Department of History and Philosophy (Ancient History). This paper has been written thanks to a Ramón y Cajal contract, granted by the Spanish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Competitiveness (MINECO); and is the result of the research project "The Kingdom of Tikunani in Upper Mesopotamia: history, administration and society according to the unpublished archives of king Tunip-Teššup (*ca*. 1620 BC)" (ref. HAR2015-63716-P), funded by the MINECO and by FEDER. Abbreviations follow the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und vorderasiatischen Archäologie* (Berlin/Leipzig).

Those phenomena existed in the Ancient Near East, as in any period of history. But there is one specific period that is rather special, in part due to the global political situation of the moment, and in part due to the type of sources that have been preserved. That period is the Late Bronze Age, which lasted from ca. 1600 to 1200 BC. This Late Bronze Age is characterized by the existence of great political powers (Egypt, Mittani, Hatti, etc.), which disputed different regions of the Ancient Near East – by means of diplomacy or warlike episodes.[1] Therefore, the period offers an excellent context for studying the consequences of political and social crises, of different types.

I shall treat only of one type of people in movement and who show the characteristics described: war refugees. The first problem that we come across is that cuneiform sources, from that era and other ones, do not offer a clear terminological difference between people in movement and people in flight. The usual scenario is that the texts are focused on runaway slaves, or sometimes criminals on the run. Thus, the terminology is ambiguous.

Foreigners are referred to in several ways.[2] The term BAR (Sumerian) / *aḫû* (Akkadian) only refers to the otherness of foreigners, but it has no ethnic or regional meaning; KÚR / *nakru* usually implies enmity or outsider status (*e.g.,* with respect to the family); U.BAR / *ubāru* probably refers to foreigners as visitors or guests;[3] captives and deportees are usually referred to by the Akkadian terms *nabku*, *asīru*, *ṣabṭu*, *nasīḫu*, etc. The usual Late Bronze Age term to describe runaways is LÚ.KAR.RA / *munnabtu* (< *abātu* II), although it usually refers to slaves.[4] As we can see, there is no specific term for war refugees, although some expressions do come close,[5] as *puzra*/*marqītu aḫāzu*, "to take refuge," especially attested during the first millennium;[6] or *raqû* N, "to hide," characteristic of the Old Babylonian sources.[7]

Hence, researchers must base themselves on context to identify refugees who have, furthermore, acquired that status due to war. The task is neither simple nor safe, as will be shown in the following pages.

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1 See a recent survey in Cline, 2014.

2 On this matter see esp. Prechel, 1992 and Beckman, 2013: 203–204.

3 Wilhelm, 2005: 181, 184, and *cf.* § 5b.

4 *AHw* 673, *CAD* M/2 203–205; see esp. Renger, 1972: 175–176.

5 Additional expressions can be found in Kämmerer / Schwiderski, 1998: 372b, 462a.

6 *CAD* A/1 178b–179a.

7 *CAD* R 175.

International Treaties

The topic of refugees is discussed in a number of international treaties that can be dated to the Late Bronze Age.[8] One of the best known is the treaty between Niqmepa of Mukiš and Ir-Teššub of Tunip, which should be dated to the 15th century BC (*AlT* 2).[9] It covers a range of matters, but one of the main subjects concerns population movement between the two neighbouring states. The relevant part states (ll. 55–59, according to Schwemer's numeration):[10]

> "[If people of my land] enter your land to preserve themselves from starvation, you must protect them and you must feed them like (citizens of) your land. Whenever they want to come to my land, you must gather and return them t[o my land]. You shall not detain a single family in your land."

The treaty requires the nations to protect refugees from the other country, and allow them to return to their place of origin (right of return). Although the matter is not referred to explicitly, it is clear that the reference is to population movement due to famine, perhaps caused by instability in the area – or by an agricultural crisis. The phenomenon is attested in a much more ancient treaty entered into by the states of Šadlaš and Nērebtum in the 19th century BC.[11] According to that text, if people found themselves forced to flee their homes in search of refuge due to war, and if they reached another country, the inhabitants of that country could not enslave them or hold them against their will.

Other treaties come from the Hittite context,[12] and Altman (2012: 133 n. 179) has identified those that cover the topic of refugees. It is important to highlight two of them. The first is *CTH* 41, which was concluded between the Hittite king Tudḫaliya and Šunaššura of Kizzuwatna, probably at the

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[8] See esp. Liverani, 2001: 63–70; Snell, 2001: 86–98; Altman 2002, 2012: 152–163.

[9] *Editio princeps* in Wiseman, 1953: 26–31, see esp. Dietrich / Loretz 1997, and the recent treatment by Schwemer, 2005: 183–186. According to Von Dassow (2008: 38), another treaty, *AlT* 3, entered into between Idrimi of Alalaḫ and Piliya of Kizzuwatna, would also imply the existence of war refugees; see a recent translation in Schwemer, 2005: 182–183, with previous bibliography.

[10] See the comments by Altman, 2004: 333, 2012: 154. I follow the English translation of Hess, 2003: II 330b.

[11] The text is *OBTI* 326, worked in detail and translated by Altman, 2012: 67–69 (with previous bibliography).

[12] On this matter see esp. Beckman, 1999; Neumann, 2010; Devecchi, 2015.

end of the 15th century BC.[13] The historical prologue contains references to refugees – although there is no exact indication that they were war refugees. Altman (2002: 334–337, 2012: 155–157) studied the topic in detail, and it is a complex one; I refer to his research. According to him, "[…] the people of Išuwa who had crossed the border into Ḫatti were entitled to the status of 'refugees' (LÚ.MEŠ *munnabtūti*), who have the right to return to their homeland at will, and once they had returned, their former host has no right to ask for their extradition" (Altman, 2002: 336).

The second is *CTH* 26, which was concluded between Paddatissu of Kizzuwatna and a Hittite king whose name has not been preserved, and that should be dated to the 16th century BC. The text is fragmented, but at one point, it reads as follows (ll. 17'–20'):[14]

> "[If the population of a settlement] of the Great King, including its women, its goods, and its large and small cattle, sets out and enters the land of Kizzuwatna, [Paddatissu] must seize them and return them to the Great King. And if the population of a settlement of Paddatissu, [including] its [women], its goods, and its large and small cattle, sets out and enters Ḫatti, [the Great King] must seize them and return them to Paddatissu."

This fragment presents population groups that cross the border between countries. Unlike other cases, they are not referred by any term that is usually used for refugees,[15] but by the syntagm URU^{ki}; thus, the reference is to a free population.[16] What is relevant is that, in this case, the host receiving the population is called upon to return the latter. According to Altman (2002: 340, 2012: 159), the treaties protect not the population, but the sovereign, who had no interest in losing large population groups.[17] Hence, the right of sojourn did not apply if the populations in movement were too large. It will be observed that the present offers exactly the opposite case: there are countries that do not wish to allow entry to refugees due to the possible instability that their arrival may cause – in fact, the current problem is not the lack of workers but the lack of work possibilities.

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[13] English translation in Beckman, 1999: 18–26.

[14] Translated by Beckman, 1999: 12–13. On the possible existence of similar clauses in other treaties see Altman, 2002: 339, 2012: 158–159.

[15] Such reference is included in other treaties; see Altman, 2012: 153–154 n. 270; Beckman, 2013: 209.

[16] On the differences between both groups see Altman, 2012: 157–159.

[17] See other possible examples in Altman, 2002: 339, 2012: 158–159, as well as the case of Southern Mesopotamia in Paulus, 2011: 8.

A Special Case: the ʿ*abirū* People

The ʿ*abirū* (sg. ʿ*abiru*, ʿ*apîru*, *ḫabiru*, etc., log. SA.GAZ) have been well known in scientific literature for over a century.[18] They were population groups who appeared in the second millennium BC in the cuneiform sources from Northern Mesopotamia and Syria. They are very often mentioned in a military context, forming part of troop contingents. However, on other occasions, they appear simply as a people with scant economic resources, or even as criminals.

Actually, the most solid suggestions consider the ʿ*abirū* to be displaced populations, something that is – implicitly or explicitly – upheld by several authors.[19] I would even go so far as to say that, on several occasions, they were displaced because of the war situation prevailing at the time. Rainey (2015: 33–34), indicates:

> "It is true that they are often found seeking refuge in mountainous areas, e.g. those political refugees at Ammia who rallied around Idrimi, himself a runaway royal charioteer, the example *par excellance* of an ʿ*apîru* (…). Usually their best option, as males with military training, was to become mercenaries and as such they appear in the personnel lists of Alalakh and Ugarit."

That is, the ʿ*abirū* were refugees of a different type, displaced due to war and seeking refuge in other areas. Some of them were notable figures, and it must be understood that their displacement was due to political reasons.[20] However, the great majority belonged to the impoverished population group that we find in the present day. Men could enrol as mercenaries in the armies of host countries, so the sources usually list them as soldiers. Women and children appear less frequently; in fact, references to them are mainly limited to from Nuzi.[21]

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[18] See, with all the previous bibliography, Bottéro, 1954, 1972–1975, 1980; Greenberg, 1955; Loretz, 1984; Durand 2004–2005 (in pp. 577–581 he suggest that the sequence SA.GAZ renders the Akkadian *ḫabbātum*).

[19] E.g. clearly by Bottéro, 1980: 204, 208–209; Liverani, 2001: 64, 2005: 27; Snell, 2001: 58; Rainey, 2003: 174–176; Fleming, 2004: 64, 2012; Durand, 2004–2005: 571–573; Von Dassow, 2008: 109–110; Westbrook, 2008: 319; Bryce, 2009: 269; Postgate, 2013: 348; Altman, 2014: 14. Note that such proposal was already made by Alt, 1956: 238–239.

[20] It would be the case of Idrimi of Alalaḫ, as well as other important people attested in the sources from Mari (Durand, 2004–2005: 571–575).

[21] See the comments by Von Dassow, 2008: 110–111.

Groups of *ʿabirū* (or at least one *ʿabiru*) appear in almost all the documentation corpuses set out in the following sections. Accordingly, their primary meaning should be taken into account: they are people who have been displaced from their places of origin (for reasons that generally relate to political instability or to war) and have gone to other areas where they can live and prosper.

Southern Mesopotamia

During the Late Bronze Age in Southern Mesopotamia, the phenomenon of runaways is well known. Those runaways were generally people fleeing harsh working conditions and semi-slavery.[22] Obviously, not all those people can be identified as refugees, since they were often caught and relocated. However, it does seem the case that the rosters of forced workers from Nippur, studied by Tenney, there appear to be groups of refugees – at least, he considers them as such (Tenney, 2011: 123). He states (p. 128):

> "The last category of entrants into the servile working pool to be dealt with here is refugees (*munnabittu*, singular). In most rosters, *munnabittu* occurs only as an entry for a group of unspecified geographical origin, often parallel with collective gentilics such as Assyrians, Elamites, Hanigalbatians, etc. In a single roster, it occurs in the heading of the text (*qinnātu ša munnabittī ša ina Lubdi ašbū*, "families of refugees who live in Lubdu") and then in the first subtotal ([*napḫaru*] 5 *qinnū munnabittū*, "total: five families, refugees")."

That is, they appear to be people from elsewhere working under the supervision of the Nippur administration. It is probable that they arrived as refugees from other areas of Mesopotamia due to political instability, war, or economic insufficiency affecting those areas.

These rosters are the only cases of displaced persons in Middle-Babylonian sources.[23] Two specific cases have already become famous. The first (*MDP* 2 p. 95–96) involves Akap-taḫe, a Mittanian who, for unknown reasons, was forced to flee his place of origin and take refuge in Babylonia.[24] That figure was an artisan of acknowledged prestige, and it is

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[22] See e.g. Brinkman, 1980: 20–21; Paulus, 2011: 3, 8; Tenney, 2011: 104–121

[23] On foreigners attested in the Middle-Babylonian documentation see esp. Sassmannshausen, 2001: 130–150.

[24] The text has been edited again by Paulus, 2014: 357–359; see also Sassmannshausen, 2001: 85a, 135a, 140a n. 2375 and Paulus, 2011: 9.

possible that his refugee status (l. 1, *munnabittu*) was related to political causes.[25] The second case (*Iraq* 11, p. 143 no. 2) involves the Elamite Ša-ṣilli-bēlti, a refugee (l. 2, *munnabittu*) who went to live in Babylon, where he was resettled as an artisan in the city of Dūr-Kurigalzu.[26] In addition, it will be seen that in the curse formulas of the *kudurrētu*, foreigners are equated with "disabled people," leading to the deduction that being foreign was not a legal difference but a social one (Paulus, 2011: 10).

Northern Mesopotamia

Tikunani

To date, only some texts from Tigunānum, *i.e.* Tikunani, recovered in illegal excavations, have been published.[27] We do not even know the precise location of the site; the subject has been widely debated, and current thinking places Tikunani somewhere on the Tigris, downstream of Diyarbakir – maybe Bismil or its vicinity (see bibliography in Richter, 2016: 16).[28] That small Hurrian kingdom was already mentioned in Old Babylonian documents from Mari (18th century BC), but no cuneiform source from Tikunani was known. In 1996, Salvini published four cuneiform texts supposedly coming from the site, kept in a private collection. He stated that there were other cuneiform documents from the same archive,[29] but since then just five administrative records have been published.[30] The late Prof. W. G. Lambert (1926–2011) examined some 450 tablets from Tikunani while they were passing through London in the late 1980s and early 1990s, though he did not distribute his transliterations or comments – as the private collection had moved to an unknown location. Finally, by using the *Nachlass* of Lambert (= *WGL Folios*), George (2013: 285–319) has been able to publish some twenty omens from Tikunani. In other words, over 400 cuneiform texts from Tikunani remain unpublished, and "they are not believed to be currently under study" (George, 2013: 285); of those, we only know their transliteration. It is estimated that all that documentation dates from ca. 1600 BC.

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[25] See the parallel of the Mittanian nobleman Aki-Teššub in Altman, 2004: 308–309, with previous bibliography.

[26] See the comments by Sassmannshausen, 2001: 30b, 133a, 160a.

[27] For a survey see George, 2013: 101.

[28] However, note that a location in the Upper Ḫabur river is also possible; see Pongratz-Leisten, 2015: 72.

[29] See e.g. Salvini, 1996: 7 n. 4, 11, 1998: 305, 2000: 56.

[30] Wilhelm / Akdoğan, 2010; George *et al*., 2017.

The presence of refugees (perhaps fleeing war) in the Tikunani texts is referenced in just a few texts. The main document is the great Prism of King Tunip-Teššub, presented by Salvini (1996: 8):

> "The text of the prism consists of a long list of masculine personal names, without patronymic, written in 8 columns, two on each of the four sides of the Prism. The text reports three sub-totals of people: 274 *Ḫabiru* under the orders of (literally «of») Zumalaḫ (col. V 45–46), 68 *Ḫabiru* under Jaḫul (col. VII 6–7), and finally 96 *Ḫabiru* under Azrabi (Colophon 1–2). These three individuals are not distinguished by titles."

Were those *ʿabirū* war refugees? Not necessarily, but they do seem to have been "displaced" from other areas, and they may have been used as mercenaries.[31] Durand (2006: 224) goes even further and indicates that these *ʿabirū* were refugees coming from Ḫaḫḫum paid by the king of Tikunani, to take action against Ḫaḫḫum.[32]

Not many more *ʿabirū* appear in the Tikunani texts, the most significant case being that of two omens.[33] Additionally, in an administrative text that reports on the silver that a city still owed (*WGL Folios* 7708), it is mentioned at the end DIŠ *zi-li-i* / DIŠ *ḫa-bi-ri* / URU *ši-bu*. Although it may form part of personal names (e.g. Ziliya, Zilip-Tilla, Zilip-nanu, etc., see Richter, 2013: 374b, 2016: 29–31), the isolate form *zi-li-i* is not attested as a personal name, so it would seem that in this case, *ḫa-bi-ri* is not one, either (see below). The function of that part of the text is not clear, and it would seem that a *ʿabiru* was going from (or to) the locality of Šibu.[34] Finally, another text attests to the personal name Ḫabira (*ḫa-bi-ra*, *WGL Folios* 7941), which was already known in Nuzi and other regions of the Ancient Near East.[35]

As is usual in a number of archives from the era, the Tikunani texts show a state of "armed peace," wherein much significance lies in accumulating arms (especially arrows in the case of Tikunani) and in training troops (perhaps made up of *ʿabirū*). Although those sources are currently being

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[31] See Rainey, 2015: 34: "Usually their best option, as males with military training, was to become mercenaries and as such they appear in the personnel lists of Alalakh and Ugarit."

[32] *Cf.* also De Martino, 2014: 68.

[33] See already Salvini, 1996: 117–122 (partially corrected by George, 2013: 106 n. 114), as well as George, 2013: 109b, 318–319.

[34] On the town of Šibu(e) see esp. Fincke, 1993: 256–257.

[35] See Gelb *et al.*, 1943: 55, 214a, and an updated analysis of the personal name in Richter, 2016: 25, 123a.

studied, they already enable a state of war to be identified.[36] A number of texts show the destruction of localities, presumably around Tikunani (e.g. *WGL Folios* 7968, 7970, 8076f).[37] Other documents indicate that there was a displaced population, probably forcibly deplaced.[38] In fact, one letter (*WGL Folios* 8166, of difficult reading and interpretation) appears to suggest the taking of prisoners of war. An exemplary case is found in an administrative text (*WGL Folios* 7925), that begins thus: *tup-pí ta-aš-ḫi-iš-ti*[39] / LÚ.MEŠ URU *ši-e-na*^{ki} / *i-na* URU *ba-ab-ri*^{ki} / *aš-bu*, "Memorandum tablet: the people of the city of Šiena (now) live in the city of Babri." The document is inscribed on the reverse LÚ URU *ši-e-na*, which suggests that there may have been other, similar tablets referring to other populations. In addition, another administrative record (*WGL Folios* 7661) contains a list of slaves – men and women – coming from specific cities. Finally, in a pledge agreement (*WGL Folios* 7769) it is said:

1 *tup-pí* ^{1}*nu-pur-ki-pá*
2 *ša a-na* ŠU.DU$_8$.A
3 ^{1}*ki-ri-ip-še-ri-iš*
4 *ù* ^{1}*ḫi-il-lu-ul-la*
5 *il-qú-ú*
6 LÚ URU *ka-wi-la-aš-da-ma-an-ni*^{ki}

$^{1–5}$Tablet of Nupur-kipa (attesting) that Kirip-šeriš and Ḫillulla have taken (him) as pledge.

^{6}(He is) a man from the city of Kawila-ašdamanni.[40]

In essence, a foreigner is taken as a pledge. It should be highlighted that the foreigner's name, Nupur-kipa, appears amongst the 438 *ʿabirū* present

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[36] See already the famous "Tabarna letter" published by Salvini, 1994, restudied in Salvini, 1996: 107–116; Durand, 2006; Hoffner Jr, 2009: 75–80.

[37] The king Tunip-Teššub of Tikunani received tributes from different towns (e.g. *WGL Folios* 7966, 8172).

[38] E.g. *WGL Folios* 8060, women brought from Ḫaḫḫum and distributed in households; or *WGL Folios* 8068, women from different cities.

[39] Note that in Nuzi the title *tuppi taḫsilti* is found as *post scriptum*; see esp. Müller, 1999a: 226–230.

[40] On this place name see perhaps in Mari *ka-wi-la-a*^{ki}, in Groneberg, 1980: 136. The personal name Kawilam is attested in Mari and Tuttul; see Durand / Marti, 2004: 135.

in the prism (V 34), and perhaps it was he – although, in *WGL Folios* 7769, there is no indication that he is an ʿ*abiru*. Note that Nuzi sources attest to displaced persons – whether ʿabirū or not – entering as slaves or in other special statuses (see below).

Nuzi, i.e. Arrapḫe

Sources from the kingdom of Arrapḫe are known especially because of its largest archive, Nuzi, which dates from *ca.* 1430–1350 BC. In particular, more recent texts show a war situation, given the arrival of Assyrian troops.[41] That context may have led to the displacement of a population fleeing war.[42]

The clearest example is not textual but archæological.[43] Nuzi suffered violent destruction that put an end to all its activity; pillaging and fire are attested to, especially in the palace and the temples. The town of Tell al-Faḫḫār (ancient name unknown), about thirty kilometres away, suffered similar destruction. Furthermore, excavations (1967–1969) showed that the population tried in vain to defend the site; 42 skeletons were found on the ground. Several people tried to flee unsuccessfully; seven of those corpses were found in a covered channel. The objects they were carrying (seals, metal objects, etc.) appear to indicate that they tried to hide or to flee unseen.[44]

For their part, the written sources of the kingdom of Arrapḫe refer to foreigners on several occasions, although most of the time those people are Mitannians integrated into the Arrapḫean society, military personnel, etc. According to Zaccagnini (2003: 580):

> "Several people from Babylonia and Assyria are also recorded in the Nuzi palace and private documents: their status ranges from official diplomatic envoys down to simple refugees seeking personal protection and sustenance by casting themselves into lifetime servitude."

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[41] This topic has been recently discussed in various studies by Maidman, 2008, 2010: 15–20, 2011a, 2011b; see in addition Dosch, 2009: 72–73.

[42] E.g. Fadhil, 1983: 97b.

[43] See e.g. Lion, 1995: 77–78.

[44] Al-Khalesi, 1970: 118 and pl. 115, 1977: 6, 15.

Of course, one of the best-known groups is that of the *ʿabirū*.[45] As has been highlighted (§ 3), they would appear to be groups of foreigners (generally refugees) fleeing war and poverty. Men could join the army, as is clearly shown in the Tikunani sources (see above). In Nuzi, other groups worked as servants for people who gave them food and a place to live, and sometimes provided other comforts (e.g. a wife). Those types of contracts are usual called "self-enslavement agreements,"[46] and in some cases, the *ʿabirū* were clearly foreigners, e.g. Assyrians (see below).[47] That is parallel to other forms of commitment, especially the "personal *tidennūtu* agreements" or simple antichretic contracts.[48] However,

> "The differences stem from the primary motivation of each of the transactions. The self-*tidennūtu* contract represents a loan transaction that an impoverished Nuzi citizen, in need of obtaining definite capital, is forced to make. (…) The *ḫāpiru* contract, however, represents a form of commendation in which the indigent *ḫāpiru*, because of his status as an "outsider", is compelled to become a dependent of a patron in order to obtain the basic necessities of life. Since the *ḫāpiru* receives no capital upon his entrance into servitude, the duration of his service and the means of his redemption differ from that of a *tidennu*. The *ḫāpiru* obligates himself for the lifetime of the patron, and may only free himself by providing the patron with a substitute. (…) The self-*tidennūtu* and *ḫāpiru* transactions represent varying degrees of indentured servitude. While both reflect a status superior to that of ordinary slaves, the status of a *tidennu* seems to have been decidedly higher than that of a *ḫāpiru*."[49]

In addition to the case of the *ʿabirū*, the texts of the kingdom of Arrapḫe contain other possible examples of refugees. A very clear example seems to be IM 70781, from Tell al-Faḫḫār.[50] The text states: "The city of

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[45] Some authors proposed that the term *ubāru* (*cf.* § 1) could refer to a type of refugee (e.g. Cassin, 1958b: 25–28). However it seems more probable that they were ambassadors of some kind; see the specific discussion in Maidman, 2010: 29, 234–235 n. 250 (proposal accepted by Postgate, 2013: 348).

[46] Main works on this subject are Chiera, 1933; Bottéro, 1954: 43–70; Greenberg, 1955: 23–32; Cassin, 1958a. More recent references can be found in Fincke, 1994: 350 n. 360; Zaccagnini, 2003: 585–586; Maidman, 2010: 26–30.

[47] See e.g. Müller, 1999b: 86; Postgate, 2013: 348.

[48] See esp. Eichler, 1973; some notes actualizing the topic are to be found in Justel, 2015.

[49] Eichler, 1973: 47.

[50] Published in transliteration by Al-Rawi, 1977: 203.

Maškani, the city of Kapra, the city of Artaḫuta, the city of Tupšarriwe and the city of Utḫušše; these five cities entered (l. 7, *e-ru-ub*) into the city of Kurruḫanni." Koliński (2001: 15b, 17b, 46, 48a) interprets the text as indicating that the first five localities appear to have come under the jurisdiction of Kurruḫanni. However, it appears more probable that in reality, what was being indicated was that the population of those cities was seeking refuge, ahead of the enemy's advance, in the locality of Kurruḫanni.[51] Equally, there exists the possibility that a well-known figure from Tell al-Faḫḫār, Bēliya son of Ar-Teya, was a refugee resident there.[52]

Another, unclear, example of refugees appears in the Nuzi text HSS 16 331.[53] It is a list of men (with just one woman), including physicians, cupbearers, and other important figures. By the end it is indicated (ll. 27–28): "Total: 26 men who are *pišanna* (and) entered Nuzi" (ŠU.NIGÍN 26 LÚ.MEŠ *ša pí-šá-an-na* / *ša i+na* URU *nu-zi ú-še-ri-bu*, *cf.* also ll. 31–33).[54] The function of the text is not clear, and that is also the case for the people mentioned, but it has been suggested that they were refugees of some type (Fincke, 2009: 232).

Finally, there are other less representative and more isolated cases that are also unclear.[55] As in other archives, that is due to the fact that many of the runaways were slaves; in other cases, we do not know exactly what the reason was for their departure, although they were important figures.[56] That lack of clarity can be observed in one example, letter JEN 499, which deals with three Assyrian women who fled (*nābutu*) and were entrusted to an important figure, Enna-mati son of Teḫip-Tilla.[57] According to Fadhil (1983: 200a), "das würde das Interesse des Königs, den Flüchtlingen und Rücksiedlern jede humanitäre Hilfe zu gewähren, gut erklären" (see also p. 199b, 230b).

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[51] See this interpretation in Müller, 1994: 27, 2009: 330. On other possible example, HSS 15 43, see Fadhil, 1983: 22.

[52] Müller, 2009: 332; on this figure see also Koliński, 2001: 214.

[53] Recent treatment by Dosch, 2009: 130–131; see also Stein, 2009: 551–552.

[54] *CAD* P 427 translates: "Total 26 men of the *p*. whom they brought into Nuzi." On the term *pišanna*, of unknown etymology (perhaps a place name), see Dosch, 2009: 131.

[55] On this issue in Nuzi see e.g. Wilhelm, 1990: 307–309. Note that *CAD* Ḫ 50a indicates that the term *ḫalqu* in *RA* 28, p. 37 no. 5 refers to fugitives (as in the Middle-Babylonian sources, *cf.* § 4), but a possible translation is also "missing (person)," and it might therefore refer to exiled people; see also *AHw* 313b.

[56] See e.g. Fadhil, 1983: 165b, 331.

[57] Transliteration and translation in Lewy, 1942: 32–33.

Middle-Assyrian Sources

The existence of the displacement of people, almost always war captives, was very common in Assyrian sources from the first millennium BC.[58] The phenomenon is less usual in sources dating from the Late Bronze Age, but it is present.[59] However, sources are almost non-existent for the case of war refugees. Those mobilisations would especially have taken place during the displacement of the Aramæans. Postgate indicates: "Much of our knowledge of the dark years of Phase 2 [i.e. 1207–935 BC] comes from the accounts of later Assyrian kings who describe how Assyrian subjects had been forced to take refuge from famine in the mountains and how some of their towns and strong points had been taken over by the newcomers."[60] Accordingly, those references are late and occur in tendentious documents; the extent to which the land was actually abandoned is difficult to assess.

For its part, the only Mesopotamian legislative corpus that is known from the Late Bronze Age is the Middle-Assyrian one. It could be hoped that it would make some reference to the refugee population. However, the only allusion to refugees occurs in *MAL* A 24, which refers to a woman abandoning her marital home and seeking refuge with another Assyrian woman.[61]

Syria and the Levant

During the Late Bronze Age, the Syrian area was the scene of numerous conflicts between various powers, especially between Ḫatti, Mitanni, and Egypt.[62] That bellicose climate doubtless involved population displacements that would occasionally take the form of refugee crises, although their exact magnitude escapes us and sometimes all we can do is conjecture.[63] For instance, concerning the activities of the king Idrimi of Alalaḫ (15th century BC), Von Dassow (2008: 38) indicates:

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[58] See esp. Oded, 1979; for the case of fugitives see now Hipp, 2015.

[59] See esp. Freydank, 1975; Jakob, 2003: 43–48.

[60] Postgate, 1992: 249; see also Jakob, 2003: 13.

[61] See Démare-Lafont, 2003: 537–538, and the specific text (with translation) in Roth, 1995: 161–162.

[62] See esp. Klengel, 1992: 84–180.

[63] See e.g. Mayer, 2001: 15b.

> "More specifically, if Idrimi did invade and ravage his northern neighbor's territory as the statue inscription describes, the consequences would likely have involved not only carrying home spoil and captives but shifting the borders of the adjacent realms and displacing parts of their populations: some people would involuntarily have become refugees, others opportunistic fugitives, and some subjects of one kingdom would have found that their place of residence was now in the other."

Qaṭna

The cuneiform texts of Qaṭna, dating from the first half of the 14th century BC, were recently published (Richter / Lange, 2012). Without going into detail, the context is one of war, set in the Syrian campaigns of Šuppiluliuma.[64] For example, the letters QS 3 1: 17–18 and QS 3 2: 37–38 show the occurrence of attacks and of prisoners being taken in Qaṭna, and the letter QS 3 2: 20–29 shows displaced troops. Various texts deal with provisioning in war supplies, e.g. arrows.

Legal and administrative documents, all of which are found in the royal palace, similarly show a context of war. As we have seen in other archives, Qaṭna also contains references to the *ʿabirū* (log. SA.GAZ), always in lists of various types (QS 3 42–44, 46). QS 3 43: 21 indicates that these *ʿabirū* came from the city of Aldān. For its part, QS 3 46 appears to be a list of just *ʿabirū*, of the style that can be observed in the Prism of Tikunani (see above).

Other cases are worthy of comment. QS 3 37, which is an allocation of oxen, indicates that a foreigner (l. 6, 1 GU_4 ŠU LÚ *na-ki-ri*) was in charge of one of those oxen. QS 3 40 is a list of men who are numbered together with their families; it is possible that it constitutes a document giving the resettlement of population, as has been suggested for some cases in Ugarit (see below).

Other cases are more doubtful. An allocation of barley appears in QS 3 35, where the recipients are called (l. 1) DUMU.MEŠ : *ḫa-ša-ši-ra*; the significance of that Hurrian term is unknown, but it may refer to a special type of population – perhaps refugees? Finally, QS 3 7 is a "self-enslavement agreement" like those studied in Nuzi (§ 5b), although in that case there is no indication of the slave being a foreigner.

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[64] On the reconstruction of the historical events see esp. Richter, 2002; Wilhelm, 2010, 2015; Gromova, 2012; Richter / Lange, 2012: 155–166.

Ugarit

Textual data from the city of Ugarit, on the Syrian coast, are from the final stage of the Late Bronze Age, essentially from the 13th to 12th centuries BC. Little has been written on the topic of war refugees, and data on the matter are not definitive; they come mainly from administrative texts, always drawn up in alphabetic cuneiform and in the Ugaritic language. Various authors put forward specific administrative documents that refer to refugees, for instance:[65]

- *RS* 11.857 (= *KTU*[3] 4.102), a list of women and their children placed "in the home of" (*b bt*) other people. In the margin, in syllabic cuneiform, there appears the name of Alašiya, i.e. Cyprus. Interpretations of the text have varied enormously, and they may be captives captured as war booty.[66] However, there is also the possibility that they were war refugees (Marsman, 2003: 680 n. 687).
- *RS* 19.096 (= *KTU*[3] 4.635), a list of foreigners' personal names. The exact nature of those people is not known, and it is possible that they were simply assigned to the authorities.[67]
- *RS* 19.42 (= *PRU* 6 no. 79).[68] It is possible that the people listed in that administrative text were not from abroad, but from coastal populations within the kingdom of Ugarit (Van Soldt, 2005: 143–144), or that they were just apprentices (Vita, 1999: 460 n. 430). That does not necessarily mean that those people were not refugees.

Other cases have been put forward, but interpreting them is even more difficult and uncertain.[69]

Conclusions

As with any historic society, there was war in the Ancient Near East, and, obviously, people fleeing war. Those war refugees can be traced in the written documentation, and partially in the archaeological documentation.

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[65] E.g. Hess, 1999: 513; De Moor, 2003: 111; Marsman, 2003: 680; and cf. Vita, 1999: 459–460.

[66] For an abstract of the proposed theories see Justel, 2008: 68.

[67] See e.g. Dietrich et al., 2013: 505a; Hess, 1999: 512; Vita, 1999: 459–460.

[68] Updated translation in Lackenbacher, 2002: 336.

[69] Among the examples proposed by the aforementioned authors, see e.g. *RS* 18.037 (= *KTU*[3] 4.349), *RS* 18.050 (= *KTU*[3] 4.360) or *RS* 18.131 (*KTU*[3] 4.393).

For example, the phenomenon is visible in the sources from the Late Bronze Age, when there existed great powers with diplomatic and warlike relations with each other.

Identifying war refugees is not easy, given that there is no specific term for those population groups and that we need to be guided by context. The topic is mentioned in various international treaties drawn up during the Late Bronze Age, it being noted that refugees had a right of sojourn and a right of return. However, some cases show that host rulers had committed themselves to returning refugees, since the phenomenon caused great harm to the countries of origin due to population loss. In that way, the contrast with the refugee crisis that were are currently experiencing is made manifest: Europe's problem is precisely the opposite, since host countries do not wish to accept refugees. That is because it is stated that their arrival may disturb socio-economic conditions.

Various cases have been shown of refugees and of populations displaced by war. In general, those examples are of two types. On the one hand, there were groups of *ʿabirū*, people who took refuge in countries other than their countries of origin, and who lacked a social fabric that would protect them. The *ʿabirū* were usually impoverished populations, so their status was usually one of semi-slavery in exchange for maintenance; the men, for their part, could serve as mercenaries. The other group is made up of populations that were not designated as refugees, but who appear as foreigners in administrative texts. Those people usually received rations from the palace, where they served. Cases of important figures are exceptional, and are limited to a number of cases from Northern Mesopotamia, specifically from the Hurrian milieu.

It remains to be discussed if war refugees did or did not freely choose their destination. We know that in the Ancient Near East, there were "cities of refuge," for instance in ancient Israel (Frymer-Kensky, 2003: 999, 1029), or in Syria during the Middle Bronze Age (Altman, 2012: 83). We do not know any of those cities from the Late Bronze Age, and (to the extent that it is possible to see) refugees tried to reach neighbouring areas. However, it is possible that Mediterranean ports, which were fully operational during the period, offered safe passage to other lands. For example, Ugarit, being the commercial metropolis that it was, received a large influx of people, and transported passengers to other states (see e.g. Monroe, 2009). The lack of data does not allow us to know if some of them were war refugees who, as a parallel to the current situation, were in transit from Syria to Europe in search of protection.

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Recruits and Deserters – How Wars affect the Civil Administration in the Late Roman Empire*

Anna Maria Kaiser

This contribution focuses on how war affects civilians in the provinces of the Late Roman Empire that were not threatened and stricken by war themselves. The following remarks consequently aim at the civil section of the administration, separated from the military administration and government by Diocletian in ca. 308 in all of the Roman provinces.[1] The Roman army's constant need for new recruits affected every part of the Roman Empire – thereby the peaceful provinces as well. In addition to detailed information on the recruiting procedures, the Egyptian papyri also accord us the privilege of reconstructing another administrative procedure in detail, namely the search for deserters. Both the recruiting of new soldiers and the search for deserters were efficiently dealt with by the civil administration, using well established channels for the search of land and tax fugitives, as will be highlighted in detail below. These procedures will have surely differed somewhat in the different provinces of the Late Roman Empire, but the overall layouts concerning the Roman army were the same everywhere in the Empire, especially since Diocletian had standardized the government of his provinces in the beginning of the 4th century.[2]

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* This article is based on research conducted in the National Research Network (NFN) "Imperium and Officium – Comparative Studies in Ancient Bureaucracy and Officialdom" (S10805–G18) funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), and especially on Kaiser, 2012b; Kaiser, 2016; Kaiser, in print. All dates mentioned are CE, if not indicated otherwise.

1 Demandt, 1989: 55; Kuhoff, 2001: 331 with n. 849 for further literature; Palme, 2007: 245.

2 For the Egyptian provinces and changing boundaries in the Late Roman period see Palme, 2013. Already in the Principate, Egypt is much less the "special case" so often cited, especially when regarding military related issues, see for example Zuckerman, 1998: 80–121; Stauner, 2004; Kaiser, 2008; Haensch, 2010.

Recruiting Procedures

For a long time, the Roman army had had enough volunteers, especially in the rather peaceful first two centuries CE. In the third century, with its frequent wars, a change came about and the government had to rely more and more on the *dilectus*, the compulsory military service, which had never been abandoned.[3] Already during the Principate it was common for a son to follow his father into the army, but no later than the time of Constantine I (311/324–337) this was made mandatory.[4] His son Constantius II (337/350–361) decreed that landowners had to supply recruits, just as they paid their other taxes. If one did not own enough land to be liable for one whole recruit, then one had to supply a share of him, meaning one had to pay the money one was due to some other landowner, who did not have to supply a whole recruit either, so that in the end two or more landowners could supply the one recruit.[5] Another possibility was to pay the recruit's tax instead of providing the man himself. Papyri concerning this *aurum tironicum*, the recruit's gold, date to the 4th and 5th centuries.[6] Parallel to the well-known phenomenon of recruiting whole barbarian clans into the Roman army in Late Antiquity, local Roman recruits were still taken on.[7] Already during the Principate units based in Egypt (and other provinces as well of course) recruited locally.[8] It only took about two generations to totally assimilate the personnel of, for example, a former Dacian unit, like

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3 For detailed information see Maspero, 1912: 52–54; Jones, 1964: 614–623; Brunt, 1998², 188–214; Zuckerman, 1998: 81–121; Carrié, 2002: 371–387 (who heavily criticizes some of Zuckerman's views); Le Bohec, 2006: 55–66.

4 Cod. Theod. VII 22.1 (Constantine to Octavian, *corrector* of Lucania and Bruttium, 319), followed by VII 22.3 (Constantine to Evagrius, 331); VII 1.5 (Valentinian and Valens, 364); VII 1.8 (Valentinian and Valens to *comes rerum militarum* Equitius, 364/365), VII 22.7 (Valentinian and Valens, 365/368/370/373); VII 22.9 (Gratian, Valentinian, and Theodosius to Petrus, Governor of Phoenicia, 380); VII 22.10 (Gratian, Valentinian, and Theodosius to Felix, *comes Orientis*, 380). For hereditary military service in the late 6th and 7th centuries see Haldon, 1979: 37–38.

5 Cod. Theod. VII 13.7 (Valentinian, Valens, and Gratian to Modestus, *praefectus praetorio*, 375); Jones, 1964: 615–616; Rea, 1997: 187–188; Le Bohec, 2006: 58.

6 For the *aurum tironicum* see Delmaire, 1989: 321–329.

7 Kaiser, 2012a.

8 Locally meaning the province in which the unit was stationed. See for example: Mann, 1983: 45–52; Keenan, 1994: 444; Le Bohec, 2006: 64; Haensch, 2010: 119–121; Kaiser, 2012b.

the *legio V Macedonica* that came to Egypt in the 280s.[9] The papyri show that Egyptian recruits preferred to join the regiment based near their *origo*, their hometown. Papyri also have accounts of brothers serving in the same units, and they also hint, as was legally required, that sons of soldiers entered their father's units.[10] The Egyptian papyri highlight a very elaborate, well-functioning system for recruiting new soldiers, using the established channels for tax collection and the search for land as well as tax fugitives – which, given the fact that Constantius II decreed that recruits had to be supplied as tax from the landowners seems very convenient.

For the second half of the 4th century we have very detailed information on all the military units based in the Egyptian provinces, not only thanks to the papyrological evidence, but also to the *Notitia Dignitatum*, an administrative handbook, listing the high civil and military offices in both the Eastern and Western Roman Empire, which has been proved to be correct in its *pars Oriens*.[11] All together there might have been 20,000 to 30,000 soldiers stationed in Egypt at any time in the Late Roman period.[12] With an estimated total population of ca. 4.75 million, 0.4% to 0.6% of the Egyptian population served in Egypt under Roman colours.[13] A legion of 5000 men (although no longer the standard size in Late Roman time) would need 280 new recruits per year to maintain the necessary military strength. A maximum of 30,000 soldiers would need about 1,500 new recruits per year to be kept up to strength.[14] This is not much at all and might explain, why some papyri suggest that military postings in Egypt were sought after and not evaded. On the other hand, the papyrological evidence shows that service abroad was not cherished and new recruits destined for abroad were likely to try to desert.[15] The *Notitia Dignitatum's* Egyptian lists give the names of sixty-five different units around the year 400. The number of troops stationed in Egypt certainly did vary between Diocletian and the Arab Conquest in 642, but every single province and *ducatus* was home to at least a handful of units, making it necessary therefore, to coordinate

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9 Zuckerman, 1998: 117.

10 Kaiser, 2012a.

11 Kaiser, 2015.

12 Maspero, 1912: 117; Kaegi, 1998: 38; Mitthof, 2001: 230–231; Palme, 2004: 113; Palme, 2011: 14–15.

13 Bagnall / Frier, 1994: 56.

14 Scheidel, 1996: 122; Palme, 2004: 101–115; 113 with nn. 55–57.

15 Kaiser, 2012a.

the recruitment.[16] This central coordination had already been proven for the Principate. [17] For the Late Roman period, there are three papyri that prove the central coordination of recruitment. Only one of them concerns recruits staying in Egypt – in 505 the Emperor Anastasius had ordered the units to be brought up to strength.[18] In 339–340 Constantius II gave the order to recruit naval personnel in Egypt and in ca. 380–382 the *comes Orientis* Eusebius ordered Egyptian recruits to be brought to Antioch.[19]

First and foremost, someone needed to initiate the recruitment of new soldiers, whether for a specific campaign or because soldiers were needed and the units were not up to strength. If the latter applied, one might think about a statement of requirement, issued by the low strength units themselves and sent up the chains of command, even if none survived. Staying in the *ducatus* themselves, the geographical area of the *duces'* commands, we have the *dux* as the highest military commander, and most likely not himself, but his *officium* as a rally point for the single statements of requirement. The request for new soldiers might have stopped at the ducal level – if the demand for recruits could be fulfilled in the *ducatus* itself. At the point in time when the *ducatus* could not supply enough recruits, the information had to go one level higher.[20] The papyri show that the *dux* and the *praeses*, the civil governor, were involved in the process of recruiting new soldiers. The *dux* gave the initial order for recruiting in the provinces or his *ducatus*, even if only passing on the emperor's orders. Recruitment was one of his key competences as a military commander.[21] Since, following Diocletian's separation of the civil and military commands, the *dux* was only competent in military matters (in theory at

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[16] Not. dign. or XXVIII: *sub dispositione viri spectabilis comitis rei militaris per Aegyptum* (13); XXXI: *sub dispositione viri spectabilis ducis Thebaidos* (22).

[17] Mann, 1983: 53; Speidel, 2007: 281–295.

[18] P.Ryl. IV 609 = Ch.L.A. IV 246 = C.Pap.Lat. 274 = C.Epist.Lat. I 242 (Hermopolis?, 505). For the Emperor ordering the draft of recruits see Cod. Theod. 7.13.2 (Valentinian and Valens to Fortunatius, *comes rerum privatarum*, Marcianopolis, 370).

[19] CPR V 10 (Hermoupolites, ca. 339–340); W.Chr. 469 = Sel.Pap. II 228 (Hermopolis?, after 380–382). Zuckerman, 1998: 101 with n. 5 wants to date the document to 370, but after the creation of the dioceses Aegyptus. Palme, 2007: 245, dates the creation of the dioceses to ca. 381. For the mentioned Gaius Valerius Eusebius as *comes Orientis* see PLRE I, 309, s.v. Gaius Valerius Eusebius 42.

[20] For a neat reconstruction of this procedure during the Principate see Speidel, 2007: 286–295.

[21] Mitthof, 2001: 151. See also Zuckerman, 1998: 104.

least), he had to leave the fiscal part of the recruiting procedures to the civil governors.[22] With the creation of the office of *dux et Augustalis* in 539 this separation disappeared.[23] With the *praeses* passing on the order of the *dux*, we enter the phase of the recruiting procedures affecting the civil administration of the provinces. Next in line was the *strategos-exactor*, primarily concerned with taxation and in charge of the fiscal matters in his *civitas*, the former *nome*.[24] He passed on the order of the *praeses* and the *dux* to his subordinates, the *praepositi pagi*, responsible for one single *pagus*, a subdivision of the *civitas*.[25] The *praepositi pagi* themselves had to make sure that the *demosioi*, village level officials, brought the recruits the village and its landowners were to supply, to a rally point, where the new recruits were to be prepared for their departure.[26] The *praepositi pagi* received their instructions in writing, but there is no evidence as yet that they in turn wrote to the *demosioi*.

The Egyptian papyri allow the reconstruction of a very firm top-down chain of command, originating at the court of Constantinople (for recruits destined for service outside Egypt), including the *duces*, and then running down the chain of command in the civil administration – the civil governor – *strategos-exactor – praepositus pagi – demosios* – the landowner, who at least since Constantius II had to supply (parts of) a recruit like any

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[22] For the blurred responsibility of the military commanders see Carrié, 2004: 105–121. CPR V 10 (Hermoupolites, ca. 339–340); P.Oxy. XLV 3261 (Oxyrhynchos, 324). In P.Oxy. IX 1190 (Oxyrhynchos, 347) the *dux* gives the order to send the recruits on to Egyptian Babylon. W.Chr. 469 = Sel.Pap. II 228 (Hermopolis?, after 380–382), unfortunately lost, is described by Wilcken as having featured the rest of a copy of a letter written by the *praeses* and dealing with the order of recruiting. The very fragmentary P.Sakaon 30 = P.Thead. 49 (Theadelphia, Arsinoites, 308–324, for the date: BL XI, 192) also seems to relay an order of the *dux*, and to be written by the *praeses*. Aurelius Gessius in P.Lips. I 54 = W.Chr. 467 (Pesla, Hermoupolites, 337) seems to have been *praeses* and passed on an initial order. PLRE I, 395, s.v. Flavius Aelius Gessius 2. For the interpretation of the papyrus see Zuckerman, 1998: 95 with n. 47.

[23] For an overview concerning the changing civil administration in Late Roman Egypt see Palme, 2007: 244–270.

[24] Lallemand, 1964: 118–126; Thomas, 1995: 231–232.

[25] Lallemand, 1964: 131–132. CPR V 10 (Hermoupolites, ca. 339–340); P.Oxy. IX 1190 (Oxyrhynchos, 347).

[26] P.Oxy. IX 1190 (Oxyrhynchos, 347); Keenan, 2013: 383–390; CPR V 10 (Hermoupolites, ca. 339–340).

other tax. What we see here is the use of the well-established civil search channels for tax fugitives for military purposes.[27]

The same channels were also used for the search for fugitive soldiers, although desertion was not very common in the Late Roman Egyptian provinces, as suggested by the papyrological documentation.

The Search for Deserters

Whilst the Egyptian papyri seem to indicate that military postings in Egypt were sought after and not evaded, the situation changes with recruits destined for service outside the peaceful provinces along the Nile. When sent abroad, the new recruits were heavily guarded, as reported in a document dating from the 380s:[28] The order for transporting new recruits, *tirones*, from the *diocesis* of Egypt to Antioch, was given by a certain Gaius Valerius Eusebius, *comes Orientis*,[29] and sent to all *riparii*, police officers, in the cities through which the recruits had to pass, from the Thebaid to Antioch.[30] The *riparii* had to take on the responsibility for the recruits the moment they entered the *riparii's* sphere of influence; actually, the *riparii* were instructed to hand over the recruits to the *riparii* of the next city and to not let anyone escape. In case there were some deserters, the *riparii* were threatened with severe punishment and either had to bring forth the deserter or a substitute. This letter clearly shows that service outside Egypt, maybe even in a unit more likely to encounter hostilities than the units based on the Nile, was not sought after. The order for delivering the newly recruited naval personnel to Antinoopolis in a sufficiently guarded manner hints at the same dislike of service abroad;[31] a sentiment, confirmed by a letter to the *praefectus alae* Flavius Abinnaeus. The letter's sender puts in a plea for his brother in law, who is the son of a soldier and supposed to be drafted. Abinnaeus should now make sure that the young man is spared military service. If this exemption is not possible, then Abinnaeus should

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[27] Jördens, 2009: 317–322.

[28] W.Chr. 469 = Sel.Pap. II 228 (Hermopolis?, after 380–382).

[29] See n. 19 above.

[30] For the *riparii* see Torallas Tovar, 2000 and more recently Sven Tost's work in the National Research Network "Imperium and Officium – Comparative Studies in Ancient Bureaucracy". *Tirones*, not yet enrolled in their unit's roster, seem to have been very vulnerable to deserting on the way to their postings, see further Jones, 1964: 648 and Cod. Theod. VII 18.9.1 (Arcadius and Honorius, 396).

[31] CPR V 10 (Hermoupolites, ca. 339–340).

at least make sure that the young man is not drafted into the *comitatus* and sent abroad; not least because his mother is a widow and her son the only remaining male relative.[32] Concerning the question of forced conscription, which Zuckerman argues was especially needed in the second half of the 4th and the first half of the 5th centuries, proved by multiple laws against desertion,[33] it appears important to distinguish between recruits destined for service abroad and those staying in Egypt. Due to the very peaceful posting near their hometowns, recruits cherished service in Egypt; some papyri even hint at queues for service in the Nile Provinces.[34]

In Egypt itself, desertion does not seem to have been a big problem. There are only four papyri relating to deserters, which nevertheless allow the reconstruction of a very efficient civil and military cooperation for the search of the runaway soldiers as well, involving civil officials also dealing with the recruiting procedures.[35] First the desertion of soldiers needed to be detected by their unit at some point. Then this unit had to start the search for the deserters; soldiers of the same unit would look for the deserters, either when on their usual patrols or when sent out especially as search parties. A notice was supposedly sent up the chain of command, either as a separate notification, or together with the usual reports of military strength that were posted on regular intervals to the *dux* as the highest military commander in the province.[36] The *dux* in fulfillment of his *officium* then alerted the other units in his military sphere of command and sent out search parties as well. We know of these ducal search parties from a graffito on the walls of the Phoebammon Monastery, dating from the 4th or 5th century, and from mentions in the Coptic vitae.[37] It also seems likely

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[32] P.Abinn. 19 = P.Gen. I 51 (Philadelphia?, Arsinoites, mid 4th c.). See further Kaiser, 2012a: 99–120.

[33] Zuckerman, 1998: 108–112. Wesch-Klein, 2004: 484 on the other hand clearly states that desertion in Late Roman times did not occur more often than during the Principate; only our sources are much more detailed and better preserved.

[34] Kaiser, 2012a: 102–103.

[35] W.Chr. 469 = Sel.Pap. II 228 (Hermopolis?, after 380–382) is the document already mentioned in which *riparii* have to guard the new recruits on the way through Egypt; P.Abinn. 32 = P.Lond. II 417 = W.Chr. 129 = Sel.Pap. I 161 = Naldini, Cristianesimo 40 = Tibiletti, Lettere private 24 (Hermopolis, Arsinoites, ca. 346); P.Flor. III 362 (unknown, 4th c.,); SB XXIV 16333 (Hermopolis, 340).

[36] Palme, CPR XXIV 15, 101–102.

[37] SB VIII 9802 = KSB I 303 (Phoibammon Monastery, Thebaid, 4th–5th cc.). For the Coptic vitae see Rémondon, 1955: 34 with n. 10.

that high ranking personnel of the *dux' officium* oversaw the overall search procedures.[38] Parallel to the information to the *dux*, the commander of the unit in question will have notified the representative of the civil government on the level of the *civitas*, the former nome, the *exactor*, who then seems to have tasked at least one *officialis* to (partially) take care of the search for the deserters. There are two documents that allow the reconstruction of a board which in this article is termed "search committee", seemingly consisting of civil and military personnel, directly coordinating the search for the deserters on the civil and the military side.[39] SB XXIV 16333 hints that the search committee consisted of at least the aforementioned *officialis* from the office of the *strategos-exactor* and soldiers of the unit to which the deserters belonged. By implementing this committee, the elaborate chains of command could be cut short and the search thus better coordinated. We thereby gain access to something that in today's military diction would be called CIMIC – civil-military-cooperation. The civil official in this search committee ordered the subordinates of the *strategos-exactor* to look out for the deserters – the *praepositi pagi* came first down the civil chain of command, who in turn ordered the village officials, *komarches*, to take care of the problem.[40] The village officials were the ones who for sure knew all the inhabitants in person and were therefore bound to know, who did not belong to the village community and who therefore might be suspicious. Should the deserters show up in their respective villages, the *komarches* had to appear together with "their" deserters at the *officium* of the *strategos-exactor*. If the fugitives were not found in that way, we can conclude that the *strategos-exactor* in question was sure to inform his colleagues on the same level, thereby starting more than one civil chain of search for the deserters; a procedure known from the search for civil tax fugitives, albeit in the Principate. P.Flor. III 362 terminates with a list which is only partially preserved naming all the deserted soldiers in question. Similar lists are known from the search for

[38] The *protector* in P.Flor. III 362 (unknown, 4th c.) most likely belongs to the *officium* of the *dux* (Kaiser, 2012b: 384–385).

[39] P.Flor. III 362 (unknown, 4th c.); SB XXIV 16333 (Hermopolis, 340). For the detailed reconstruction see Kaiser, 2012b: 388–398.

[40] For a *praepositus pagi* as sender of SB XXIV 16333 (Hermopolis, 340) see Worp, 1998: 159.

fugitive civilians.[41] There is also the possibility that immediately after notification of a desertion, the *officium* of the *dux* informed the civil *praeses* who in turn started his civil search mechanisms.

Conclusion

Since there are only four documents from the whole of Egypt mentioning deserters or the search for deserters, this elaborate search mechanism for the few soldiers deserting their posts in the peaceful provinces along the Nile (soldiers destined for service abroad were another topic all together, as pointed out earlier), might seem slightly inflated, but then the army only made good use of the already existing civil search channels and methods implemented and tested for the search for fugitive liturgists or tax payers. The same is to be said of the recruiting procedures discussed earlier – the army makes perfect use of the civil government and its tax collection channels as well as the trusted and well implemented search methods for tax or land fugitives. Wars therefore, fought on very different borders and provinces than the ones on the Nile, affected not only civilians per se in the obvious way, that every soldier was a civilian before joining the army, but also affected the civil chains of administration on a most regular and day to day basis, intertwining military and civil spheres readily and most effectively.

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[41] Jördens, 2010: 345–349. Two of the documents mentioned above shedding light on the recruiting procedures end in lists as well: CPR V 10 (Hermoupolites, ca. 339–340) and P.Oxy. IX 1190 (Oxyrhynchos, 347). CPR V 10 unfortunately breaks before the list's contents start. P.Oxy. IX 1190's list is incomplete too, but gives the names of the villages of the 5th pagus addressed in the letter and the names of the *demosioi* responsible for certain recruits, with whom they had to present themselves in the city, thereby providing a rough parallel to the *komarches* being summoned to present themselves with deserters from their villages.

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General Session

Why Were Cities Destroyed in Times of War? A View from the Southern Levant in the Third and Second Millennia BCE

Igor Kreimerman

Introduction

Destruction layers dominate the stratigraphy of the major occupation mounds in the Southern Levant and are considered the backbone of archaeological research. Since they are rich in finds, they provide valuable data for the study of art, cult and the daily life of the inhabitants. At first glance, one might consider the presence of these layers to be nothing out of the ordinary. After all, many military campaigns, revolts and natural disasters are known from the literary sources. However, things are not as straightforward as they seem. Sometimes, as is evident from both historical and archaeological sources, conquest did not end in destruction. To list just a few examples from the historical sources, when Hammurabi conquered Mari, he did not destroy it at first; he wreaked destruction on it only two years later, after it rebelled. Similarly, he is said to have shown mercy on the city of Larsa.[1] Sennacherib, in his campaign against the Kassites, destroyed the small villages but not the large cities, which he in fact resettled.[2] There are other cases in which cities, though captured by force, were not destroyed, but no explicit reasons are given for this.[3]

The archaeological record provides a similar picture: a few military campaigns that are well attested in the literary sources cannot be associated with any known destruction layers. The campaign of Shoshenq I is

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1 Charpin / Ziegler, 2003: 242–245; Rutz / Michalowski, 2016; but see a different view by Sasson, 1998: 461.

2 RINAP 3/1, 3.

3 E.g., Context 1.72; Bryce, 1983: 50, 55.

attested both in a relief in Amun's temple at Karnak, in the Hebrew Bible, and in a fragment of a stela found at Megiddo. After heated debate and various suggestions for identifying the layers destroyed by the pharaoh, it now seems that no destruction layer can be securely associated with the campaign, the layers uncovered being either too early or too late.[4] Similarly, although it is well known that Samaria, the capital of the kingdom of Israel, was conquered by Sargon II, a recent analysis of the finds showed that the city was not destroyed.[5]

Several factors indicate that the destruction of a city was the consequence of a premeditated and well-planned decision. First, in many destruction layers no long-range weapons are found. As it is highly unlikely that a battle took place without any use whatsoever of arrows or slings – and unless, of course, they are concentrated in an unexcavated area of the site – the inevitable conclusion is that such cities capitulated without battle.[6] In such cases, therefore, one cannot argue that the destruction was the direct outcome of battle. Furthermore, battles necessarily resulted in casualties, yet even when there is clear evidence of battle – in the form of long-range weapons, for example – in most cases, no skeletons are found in the destruction debris. This implies that some time elapses between the conquest of a city and its destruction, and that these cities were purged of bodies before being put to the torch.[7] Furthermore, an examination of destruction layers from the EBA until the Iron Age shows that not all cities were destroyed in the same manner.[8] Although each destruction has its own complexity, several types of destruction, recurring in many sites and periods, can be discerned. These are delineated and discussed below. The fact that the same patterns recur suggests that these destruction strategies were chosen for a reason and were intended to achieve specific goals. Although it cannot be ruled out that in specific cases, a destruction layer

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4 Ussishkin, 1990; Finkelstein / Piasetzky, 2009.

5 Tappy, 2007.

6 In some sites, indeed, evidence of battle is found only in a restricted area; this conclusion does not extend to such sites. However, the lack of long-range weapons in the destruction debris is typical of most extensively excavated sites, where the absence of long-range weapons does not seem to be a matter of chance. For a more detailed explanation of when this conclusion can be drawn, see Kreimerman, 2016.

7 Kreimerman, 2017b.

8 E.g. Finkelstein 2009; Kreimerman, 2017a.

corresponds to a type described here by chance, it seems highly unlikely that the prevalence of these patterns is a matter of coincidence.

Most studies on destruction layers consider the act of destruction itself to correlate it with historical sources and to offer a historical reconstruction. The aim of this paper is to take this one step further and consider the manner in which the city was destroyed, and not merely the presence of destruction. With this goal in mind, three types of destruction that recur in different periods will be examined in light of the literary sources. It should be clear that some destruction layers do not fit the patterns discussed below. The archaeological identification of these patterns is explained elsewhere.[9] In this paper the emphasis is on the interpretation of these patterns in light of the literary sources.

The destruction of cities is a very broad subject, common to many cultures and geographic areas, and consequently, there is a wealth of archaeological and textual references to this issue. Our discussion is restricted to the Bronze and early Iron Age Southern Levant (Fig. 1), and more precisely, to the EB III – Iron IB (ca. 2800–1000 BCE).

Literary sources for the Southern Levant in the Bronze Age and the early Iron Age are scarce, with the best corpus, the Amarna Letters, covering only a few decades. Thus, the royal inscriptions of third- and second-millennium BCE Mesopotamia and Assyria are employed as a complementary source.[10] Use of these sources is not devoid of problems; since they were written by rulers of large cities and empires, they do not represent other sectors, such as smaller cities and nomadic groups. The reasons for destroying a city are commonly not mentioned, and even when they are, the sources generally refer to a divine decree.[11] Furthermore, even when the reasons for the destruction can be deduced, the exact manner of destruction is rarely stated. Finally, most of the sources discussed are royal inscriptions and were written to convey a message. In order to achieve this goal they utilized formulaic language and hyperbole; consequently, these texts cannot be taken at face value.[12] Nevertheless, the literary sources

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[9] Kreimerman, 2017a.

[10] Later texts are considered because the manner of destruction of a city could change over time. Most specifically, the Hebrew Bible, which discusses events that could have happened in the Bronze and early Iron Age but was written and edited in a later period, is be considered.

[11] Altman, 2012; Bachvarova, 2016.

[12] Younger, 1990; Dalley, 2005; Baker, 2014; Bachvarova, 2016.

Fig. 1: Map of the southern Levant, with the sites mentioned in the text indicated.

reflect certain practices that were well known to the people of the period and therefore could be used in such inscriptions to convey a message. Thus, the inscriptions may contribute to our understanding of the nature of the practice, regardless of the historicity of specific cases.

Type 1: "Urbicide" – the Killing of a City

By "urbicide"[13] we refer to cases whenever a city was completely burned and also abandoned for decades. By "completely burned" we mean that all the city's structures were burned to the ground and only in open spaces, such as courtyards or streets, were there no signs of fire. Furthermore, in most cases the clear majority of structures in these cities were rich in restorable vessels and other precious finds; thus, they must have been abandoned in haste.[14]

With very few exceptions, whenever a city was completely burned it was also abandoned for decades. This correlation cannot be underestimated. Most of the cities in the period discussed were built with stone foundations and an upper mudbrick structure. A fierce fire burns the mudbricks, making them stiffer but also crumblier. As a result, it is difficult to rebuild a burnt structure. The old mudbricks must be excavated and removed and new ones produced, a process requiring a great investment of energy. This does not mean that such a reconstruction is impossible. There is both archaeological and modern evidence for the reconstruction of burned cities according to the same layout,[15] indicating that the burning of a city does not necessarily entail its abandonment. Furthermore, since each resident had his social status, property, and most importantly, his domicile, fields, and occupation, abandonment was an undesirable course of action.[16]

The abandonment of a city could be the outcome of various factors. It could be motivated by the residents themselves, either due to an environmental change that rendered the site less favorable for habitation or due to a change in the needs of the society, which would lead to the preference

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[13] The term follows Bevan, 2006.

[14] For identification of the speed of abandonment, see Stevenson, 1982; Schiffer, 1987: 89–98; Nelson / Schachner, 2002.

[15] For modern examples, see Gordon 1953; archaeological examples are available from late second-millennium BCE Cyprus. Both in Sinda (Furumark / Adelman, 2003: 29, 31, 44–64) and Maa Paleokastro (Karageorghis / Demas, 1988: 8–50) one observes a complete burning of the cities and subsequent reconstruction, with the same city plan maintained.

[16] Tomka / Stevenson, 1993; Nelson / Schachner, 2002.

of a new location after the destruction. In other words, it is possible that the available infrastructure, the property of the people, and the social organization made living in the city favorable for most residents, but that the situation changed when the city was destroyed and a significant investment of effort and means was necessary in order to restore the city. Now different scenarios might become more favorable, such as the construction of a new city in a different location or complete abandonment in the event of a significant deterioration in living conditions or the adoption of a different, perhaps nomadic, lifestyle by the population.

Alternatively, it is possible that despite the inhabitants' desire to reconstruct the city on the same spot, there was an external force, perhaps the one that destroyed the city, that was interested in preventing the reconstruction of the city and was able to do so, forcing the residents to migrate elsewhere.

It is very difficult to distinguish archaeologically between an abandonment imposed by an external power and one stemming from a change in the group's preferences. There are, however, several factors that could provide a hint as to the more probable cause:

1. The nature and location of the settlement in subsequent periods. One possible scenario is that settlement patterns in the subsequent period changed, either with different geographical locations preferred (e.g., valleys instead of hilltops) or with continued abandonment of the settlements even when the political situation changed. In such a case one might argue in favor of environmental causes for the abandonment. The other possible scenario is that in contrast to the site in question, settlement patterns of the subsequent phase did not change significantly in other sites, which either maintained their same geographical location or were resettled following a change in political circumstances. In such as case, one might assume that the abandonment was forced.
2. The exclusivity of abandonment after a destruction. If only sites that were violently destroyed were abandoned, while other sites maintained continuity of settlement, one might argue in favor of a forced abandonment. However, if many other sites were abandoned, even though they were not destroyed, it is more likely that other factors, such as environmental ones, were at play.

Type 1 destructions appear first in the EBA. In the light of the methodological remarks above, it is of interest to examine when is the earliest that we can prove that the abandonment was imposed by the destroyer. For methodological purposes, three cases are examined, occurring at the end of the EBA, the end of the MBA and the Iron Age IB–IIA transition.

The first case study is the EBA III, the end of the first urban phase in the history of the Southern Levant. At the end of the period, several large, prominent and walled cities were destroyed by a great fire and later abandoned for decades. Two cases, of Leviah and Bab ed-Dhraʿ, provide evidence of a battle preceding the conflagration.[17] In many other sites, no clear evidence of battle exists, but the cities were completely burned, the destruction debris was full of restorable vessels, and a significant occupation gap is evident. This is notable, for example, at Tel Dothan,[18] ʿAi (et-Tell),[19] Khirbet el-Makhruq,[20] Khirbet al-Batrawy IIIB,[21] Jericho[22] and other sites in the Jordan Valley.[23] After destruction the vast majority of these mounds remained abandoned or were reoccupied by small villages.[24] However, even sites that were not destroyed were abandoned.[25] Some of these, such as Beth Yerah, Tel Yarmuth and ʿAi, were deserted or only sparsely settled for many centuries to come and never regained their former status as prominent cities. Furthermore, the entire settlement pattern in the subsequent period, the Intermediate Bronze Age, changed. Instead of large fortified cities and smaller villages, there was now a large nomadic population and mostly small villages.[26] Taken in conjunction, these factors suggest that while the destruction of these sites could be the result of conflict, the long-term abandonment was probably due to intra-societal reasons or environmental factors.[27]

The second case study is the MBA, the next urban phase in the history of the area, in this period elaborate fortifications were constructed to protect the cities.[28] The transition between the Middle and Late Bronze Ages is characterized by very violent destructions in the Southern Shephelah and in the highlands. In three sites that suffered such destruction –

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17 Schaub / Chesson, 2007; Paz, 2011.

18 Master et al., 2005: 34–35, 39–42.

19 Callaway, 1980: 45–47.

20 Damati et al., 1993.

21 Nigro, 2017.

22 Nigro, 2014: 76–79; 2017.

23 Gallo, 2014.

24 Mazar, 2006.

25 For a more complete list, see Nigro, 2017: Table 8.1.

26 Mazar, 2006.

27 For the possible causes and outcomes of this process, see Greenberg, 2017, with references therein.

28 Burke, 2008; Rey, 2012; and see below.

Shechem XV,[29] Gezer XVIII[30] and Tell Beit Mirsim D[31] – skeletons were found trapped within the destruction debris. In other cases, such as Shiloh VII,[32] Jericho,[33] Lachish VIII[34] and Tel Batash IXA,[35] the sites were completely burned. After the destruction, an occupation gap of several decades is evident in all these sites, if one disregards a short presence of squatters.[36]

One should note that in this period abandonment was almost unique to sites that were thoroughly burned. Other sites, such as Hazor,[37] Megiddo,[38] Beth Shean,[39] Pella,[40] Tell Deir ʿAlla,[41] Aphek,[42] Ashkelon and probably Tel Seraʿ,[43] which show partial or no evidence of destruction, exhibit reconstruction or continuity in the subsequent period in varying degrees. Furthermore, a few decades later the sites that had been destroyed were reconstructed and had once again become prominent cities. All this, along with a lack of data that could support a climatic event, suggests that neither the needs of the local population nor environmental conditions changed significantly in the transition between the periods.[44] This could indicate that the abandonment of these sites was the result of an external force preventing their habitation. When the political conditions changed, these sites could reemerge.

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29 Campbell, 2002: 119–123, 130–131, 137–141, 165–166.

30 Seger, 2013: 23–36, 62, 82–84, 86–87, 90–96.

31 Albright, 1938: 26, 37–42, 57–58.

32 Finkelstein, 1993: 69, 71–78; Finkelstein / Lederman, 1993: 49–62; Lederman / Finkelstein, 1993: 35–43.

33 Kenyon, 1981: 110, 352–353, 359; Marchetti, 2003: 312–316; Nigro, 2006: 29–33; 2014: 37–39; 2016: 14–15.

34 Tufnell, 1958: 48; Ussishkin, 2004a: 55–57; 2004b: 152–160.

35 Mazar, 1997a: 23, 40–51.

36 For Shechem see Duff, 2015: 6–9, 11–15, 161–163, for Lachish see Ussishkin, 2004a: 56–57; 2004b: 160–168.

37 Ben-Tor, 2016.

38 Loud, 1948: 15–16, 97–104; Halpern, 2000: 540–542.

39 Mullins / Mazar, 2007: 92–112.

40 Bourke, 1997: 104–107; 2004: 4–7 .

41 Franken / Ibrahim, 1978: 75–78; van der Kooij, 2006: 202–214.

42 Yadin, 2009: 10, 27, 31–39.

43 Oren, 1982: 164–165; 1993b

44 Langgut et al., 2013: 159–160.

Although there are several cases of urbicide in the LBA,[45] this destruction strategy becomes popular again in the third period considered here, the Iron IB–IIA transition (late eleventh–early tenth century BCE). In this period, fierce destructions are evident in several places. In the northern valleys, many Canaanite cities, such as Tell Keisan 9a,[46] Tel Kinrot V,[47] Tel Hadar IV,[48] ʿEn Gev KIV–MV,[49] ʿEn Ẓippori III,[50] Yoqneʿam XVII,[51] ʿAfula III,[52] Megiddo VIA,[53] Beth Shean V,[54] Tel Dothan[55] and Tell el-Hammah,[56] were violently destroyed and either abandoned throughout the Iron Age IIA or resettled, after a noticeable occupation gap, by a new Israelite culture. In contrast, other nearby sites, such as Tell Qiri[57] and Reḥov,[58] show continuity. The location of these destructions in the fertile northern valleys and the presence of nearby sites that were not destroyed make it unlikely that environmental changes were the reason for the abandonment.[59] Furthermore, in the case of Megiddo VIA, where many skeletons were found in the destruction layer, most were found buried within the debris and not, as one would expect, lying crushed under the debris. In other words, the skeletons were found after the destruction,

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45 Sites that suffered a type 1 destruction, Kreimerman, 2017a.

46 Briend, 1980; Humbert, 1981.

47 Fritz and Münger, 2002; Fritz and Vieweger, 1996; Fritz, 1997, 1990; Münger et al., 2011; Pakkala et al., 2004.

48 Kochavi, 1998, 1993b; Shoval et al., 1989.

49 Mazar et al., 1964; Sugimoto, 2015.

50 Dessel, 1999; Dessel et al., 2008.

51 Zarzecki-Peleg, 2005: 13–34; Zarzecki-Peleg et al., 2005.

52 Dothan, 1955; Gal / Covello-Paran, 1996.

53 Arie, 2013a: 253–257, 2013b, 2006; Cline / Samet, 2013: 275; Finkelstein, 2009; Finkelstein et al., 2000; Franklin, 2013; Gadot / Yasur-Landau, 2006; Gadot et al., 2006: 94–101; Harrison, 2004; Ilan et al., 2000; Sass / Cinamon, 2006; Sass, 2000; Zarzecki-Peleg, 2016: 13–21.

54 James, 1966; Panitz-Cohen / Mazar, 2009: 162–171.

55 Master et al., 2005: 67–86.

56 Cahill, 2006: 434–435.

57 Ben-Tor / Portugali, 1987.

58 At Reḥov there is a destruction in Phase D-4, followed by a renewal of the settlement in Phase D-3 (also dated to the Iron Age IB), represented mostly by pits constructed over a considerable timespan. No evidence of destruction was found in Phase D-3 (Bruins et al., 2007; Mazar, 2008).

59 There is also no evidence for a climatic change during the period; Langgut et al., 2013: 161–162.

taken out of the debris and then buried inside in an organized manner. The fact that the deceased were not buried outside the city or under the floors demonstrates that there was no intention to return to the site.[60]

On numerous occasions, the ancient literary sources state that settlements were destroyed and regions depopulated. These descriptions are normally given in general terms and do not detail the extent of the destruction. However, a pattern occurs in several texts consisting of the destruction of a specific city and the prevention of future habitation, usually accompanied by a ritual of sowing of salt or weeds. Examples of such treatment of cities is evident in Assyrian inscriptions, like in the case of Adad Nārārī I:

> "After his death, Uasašatta, his son, revolted, rebelled against me, and committed hostilities. He went to the land Ḫatti for aid. The Hittites took his bribes but did not render him assistance… I conquered, burnt, and destroyed the city Irridu and the cities within the district of the city Irridu and sowed salty plants over them."[61]

A similar action is known from the reign of Shalmaneser I:

> "The city Arinu, the holy city founded in bedrock, which had previously rebelled (and) disregarded Aššur: with the support of Aššur and the great gods, my lords, I captured (and) destroyed that city and sowed salty plants over it. I gathered (some of) its earth and made a heap of it at the gate of my city, Aššur, for posterity."[62]

In earlier cases, the notion of consecrating a city to the gods is known, but the ritual of sowing the land with weeds is not mentioned:

> "Kulunnum rebelled and waged war against Zabazuna. The gods Adad, Eštar, and Nišba heard the word of Zabazuna – he destroyed the city of (Kulunnum) and consecrated it to those gods."[63]

This ritual is known from second-millennium Hittite sources[64] and also occurred in the first millennium BCE, as is evident from the Hebrew Bible[65]

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[60] Kreimerman, 2017b.
[61] RIMA 1: A.0.76.3.
[62] RIMA 1: A.0.77.1.
[63] RIME 4: E4.19.1.1; see also E4.19.1.2, E4.19.1.3.
[64] Roszkowska-Mutschler, 1992; Del Monte, 2005; Lorenz / Schrakamp, 2014.
[65] Fensham, 1962; Gevirtz, 1963; Stern, 1991.

and from neo-Assyrian and other sources.[66] The Hittite rituals, of which we have the most detail, were performed against rebellious or disobedient cities.[67] They included the burning of a city, the removal of the statues of the local gods, the pronunciation of a curse, the sowing of a certain type of weed, the dedication of the city to a god, the declaration of a curse upon any future habitation and the establishment of the borders of the execrated area.[68] Not all these components appear in all examples.[69]

It should be noted that despite this detailed ritual, which seems to be intended to prevent any future habitation, in two cases it is clear that such cities were resettled.[70]

As this method was used mostly for cities described as rebellious, in contrast to cities captured for the first time, one might understand it as a means to punish the residents and ultimately to prevent future hostilities.

In the above-mentioned archaeological cases, there is a correlation between the very thorough burning, which most probably required effort and planning, and the long-term abandonment of the sites, which must have required some military presence in the area in order to prevent the return of the inhabitants. The complete burning of these cities must thus be understood as another means to hamper reconstruction of the sites. The burning of the city also meant that any reconstruction would be a major and consequently visible enterprise, enabling the destroyer to put an end to the work.

Furthermore, we see a clear tradition in the literary sources of the third and second millennia BCE of a practice involving the burning of a city and the performance of a ritual intended to prevent its habitation. Thus, a case could be made in favor of associating the type of destruction in the above-mentioned sites with urbicide, the ritual killing of a city, or its dedication to a god. As we have no literary evidence for such a ritual that would correlate with the archaeological examples presented here, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to prove such a connection. However, even if it is impossible to prove that the sites in question were consecrated to the gods as part of a ritual, they nevertheless reflect a similar notion of destruction with intent to prevent future habitation.

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66 E.g. Stern, 1991; Dalley, 2005; Baker, 2014; but see Ridley, 1986.

67 Although it is possible that in two cases the cities are described as hard to reach (Roszkowska-Mutschler, 1992).

68 Roszkowska-Mutschler, 1992: 11–12; Del Monte, 2005.

69 Roszkowska-Mutschler, 1992.

70 Roszkowska-Mutschler, 1992: 12.

Type 2: "The Destruction of Power" – Destruction that Focuses on Public Buildings

By "destruction of power"[71] we refer to a strategy that was commonly employed, especially in the LBA, to burn the public structures, leaving private structures unburnt. This is not to say that private structures were not harmed at all: some of them are found with restorable pottery, suggesting that they were abandoned rapidly. Others were either abandoned in an organized manner, leaving hardly any objects on the floors, or were not harmed at all and continued without any break to the next phase. Most of the cities that underwent this type of destruction were reconstructed following the same layout. This destruction type was first identified at the final LBA city at Hazor XIII[72] (which is an exception to this type of destruction as it was abandoned).

This destruction type is common mostly in the LBA IIB (the thirteenth century BCE) and is evident in sites such as Tell Keisan 13, Megiddo VIIA, Tel Yinʿam XIIB, Beth Shean VII and VI, Shechem XI, Tel Mor VII, Ashdod XIV, Tel Ṣippor VI, Lachish VII, and perhaps Tell Beit Mirsim C2 and Megiddo VIIB.[73]

The identification of this destruction type in the literary sources is very difficult. The reason for this is simple: although the sources sometimes state that a palace, a temple, or some other public building was burnt,[74] they do not mention what happened to the rest of the city's structures. Several texts relate to the destruction of temples as an act against the gods.[75] We also have examples of rulers who decided to destroy monuments of rulers whom they considered illegitimate.[76] In other cases, the burning of exclusively palaces and temples is mentioned as the result of an accident.[77]

The explanation of this destruction type is therefore more speculative than type 1 destructions. Our interpretation relies upon two key points:

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[71] To borrow Cunningham's (2007) term.

[72] Zuckerman, 2007.

[73] See Kreimerman, 2017a: tabs. 9.3–9.4 for references for these sites.

[74] e.g. RIMA 1: A.0.78.1; RIME 1: E.1.9.9.5; EA 62; EA 306; EA 371.

[75] RIME 1: E1.9.9.5; RIME 4: E4.11.1.1.

[76] A good example is Puzur-Sîn who says that he destroyed the palace of Šamšī-Adad I, whom he considered illegitimate and who had previously destroyed the temples of the city (RIMA 1: A.0.40).

[77] For example, Shalmaneser I mentions a fire that took place in the Aššur temple and necessitated its complete rebuilding (RIMA 1, A.0.77.1), EA 151.

the focus on the public and symbolic buildings and the continuity of the settlements. The demolition of the public buildings and the symbols of the regime, and especially of the temples, indicates that the ruling class was the focus of the destruction. However, if the goal of the destroyer was only to replace the ruler, there was no reason to burn the palace, let alone the temples, an action that would necessitate later reconstruction efforts on the part of the new ruler. It seems more likely, therefore, that the decision was aimed against the ruling class and the social order in the city. Furthermore, public structures were usually massive buildings, located at a prominent point – often the highest location – in the city. They would leave a powerful impression upon the residents of the city, as well as upon any passerby. The structures symbolized the world order and the domination of the gods, represented by the temples, and man, represented by the palaces.[78] Thus, a fire burning down the temples and palaces would also bear symbolic meaning: it projected the collapse and crisis of the world order to the nearby settlements, and it symbolized the destruction of power.[79] When these structures were demolished, the landscape became dominated by ruins, communicating a sense of crisis and despair.

The second noteworthy point is that, as mentioned above, most of the cities destroyed in this manner were later reconstructed according to the same plan. In most cases, both the private structures and the public buildings were reconstructed. Furthermore, the material culture of the new sites shows clear continuity with the previous period. This suggests that these were the same people and that the social structure of the cities did not change. It appears that whoever destroyed these settlements was either unable to bring about their abandonment or to settle in them or else was uninterested in doing so. Otherwise, one would expect at least the public structures to be constructed according to a different plan in order to draw a distinction between the new ruling class and the old.

In sum, it seems that a type 2 destruction was not used to replace the ruler, to bring about the abandonment of the site, or even to allow the conqueror to resettle it. The destroyer was apparently uninterested in the long-term benefits of exploitation of the site. This more or less rules out large and powerful imperial forces. Furthermore, as Egyptian sites such as Beth Shean, Tel Mor and Aphek also suffered such destructions, it is unlikely that it was the Egyptians who employed this destruction

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[78] Rapoport, 1976; Lawrence / Low, 1990; Maran et al., 2006; Garfinkel et al., in press.

[79] Cunningham, 2007; Zuckerman, 2007; Tricoli, 2014.

technique. One might argue, albeit with some hesitation, that this destruction technique was imposed by smaller forces – either nearby cities engaging in conflict or groups of nomads. Such agents might, after conquering the city, plunder its palaces and temples and perhaps even occupy them for a while. However, in the LBA, the period when this type of destruction appears, the land was ruled by the Egyptians. Thus, after news of the conquest of a city had reached the Egyptian administration, it would not have been difficult to drive these hostile forces out of the cities. In fact, a mere rumor about an approaching imperial force could make the occupiers abandon these cities in an effort to avoid doing battle with such a mighty force. In such a scenario, the public structures might have been burnt on their retreat. Thus, the ruling class of these cities would be harmed and would have to invest great efforts in reconstruction and the conquerors could manifest their superiority over the conquered city and over the current world order. The burning of the public structures would convey this message to all the nearby settlements.

This reconstruction is in keeping with the literary sources for the LBA and especially the Amarna Letters. There, we have evidence for multiple episodes of rulers occupying cities for short periods before retreating due to Egyptian intervention.[80] Similarly, groups of social outcasts, the Ḫapiru, are known to have raided and subdued cities for short periods.[81] Furthermore, it is known that both groups used fire as a mean of destruction.[82] Afterwards the cities were reconstructed, only to be conquered or raided again. The use of this destruction technique by relatively weak city states and groups of raiders could also account for its absence from the literary sources.

Type 3: "Defortification" – the Destruction of Fortifications

The erection of fortifications in cities is a well-known process, allowing effective protection in times of war, regularizing access to the city and communicating power to the surroundings. The reverse process – that of "defortification"[83] – could occur in three possible ways. One is a violent

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[80] Morris, 2005: 271–293, 343–504, 691–740.

[81] Morris, 2005: 152–155, 223–227; and see Rainey, 2015: 18–25, 31–35 with references within.

[82] EA 62; EA 185; EA 186; EA 306 .

[83] I thank Y. Garfinkel for suggesting this term.

destruction evident exclusively around the fortifications, as a consequence of which the city would be reconstructed but the fortifications would go out of use. The second case is the prevention of the reconstruction of fortifications following a destruction. In such a case, although the focus of the destruction might not be the fortifications, ultimately, when the city was reconstructed, sometimes after an occupation gap, it was not walled. The third possibility is a relatively smooth transition between two strata, without destruction, but with the fortifications going out of use.

The best archaeological examples of defortification come from the transition between the Middle and Late Bronze Ages. In the MBA the Southern Levant was home to well-fortified cities. The fortification process was gradual, starting in coastal sites and the valleys as early as the MB IIA (twentieth–nineteenth centuries BCE) and reaching the inland and highland sites during the MB IIB–C (nineteenth–sixteenth centuries BCE). The construction of fortifications required a great investment of resources. Huge embankments and glacis surrounded the sites, and city walls, gates and towers were constructed.[84] The end of the MBA affected different areas in the country in different ways. In the south and the highlands fierce destructions were evident (see above). In the north, in contrast, the transition seems to have been, generally speaking, smooth and without violence.

When the sites were rebuilt, most were unfortified and residential buildings were constructed in places once occupied by city walls or towers. This is the case in Megiddo X–IX,[85] Tel Qashish VIII–VII,[86] Ta'anach,[87] Pella,[88] Tel Dothan,[89] Gezer XVIII–XVII,[90] Tel Batash IXA–VIII,[91] Beth Shemesh,[92], Tell Deir ʿAlla[93] and Ashkelon.[94] The result was that most of the LBA cities were unfortified and therefore more vulnerable than their MBA predecessors.

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[84] Burke, 2008; Rey, 2012.
[85] Bonfil, 2012: 137–138.
[86] Ben-Tor / Bonfil, 2003: 230–248.
[87] Lapp, 1964: 17–20; 1969: 22.
[88] Bourke, 1997: 104–107; 2004: 4–7; Bourke et al., 2006: 26.
[89] Master et al., 2005: 49–55.
[90] Seger, 2013: 31–32.
[91] Mazar, 1997a: 45–51.
[92] Mackenzie, 1913: 10–11, 23–25; Bunimovitz / Lederman, 2008: 1645; 2013: 7–18.
[93] Franken / Ibrahim, 1978: 75–78; van der Kooij, 2006: 202–214.
[94] Stager et al., 2008: 234–236.

Some cities, however, either remained fortified or were refortified during the LBA. The destructions in these cities are generally characterized by evidence of fire mainly in the vicinity of the fortifications. The best example of this is Hazor XIV, the largest city in the Southern Levant (ca. 80 ha. in size). The city continued to be fortified throughout the early stages of the LBA, as is evident by two massive gates positioned within the MB IIB rampart. In the LBA IIA the city witnessed a partial destruction. The gate in Area K was burned by a fierce fire that left a layer of destruction debris 1.5 m thick, and the gate in Area P, although not violently destroyed, went out of use.[95] In contrast to the gates, evidence of trauma, such as restorable vessels or traces of fire, was found in very few locations within the city.[96] After this partial destruction the city was reconstructed following a similar plan. The only public structures not reconstructed were the city gates. Other sites that were defortified following a partial destruction include Tell Abu Hawam Vb,[97] Shechem XIII,[98] Gezer XV[99] and Ashdod XVII.[100]

Indeed, this pattern of destruction is in keeping with tactics known from many royal inscriptions.[101] Some inscriptions refer to the destruction of the city walls of a conquered city (a practice known to military engineers as ‚slighting'), sometimes along with the replacement of the ruler. The walls did not necessarily have to be completely destroyed, but were left with major breaches and perhaps with no city gates, thus no longer providing the city with effective protection. The goal was thus to prevent the city from rebellion, a goal that was not always successful.[102] Several inscriptions support this interpretation:

> "In that same year, – La'um, king of Samānum and the land of the Ubrabium, Baḫlukullim, king of Tuttul and the land of the Amnānum, Aiālum, king of Abattum and the land of the Rabbum – these kings rebelled against him. The troops of Sūmû-Epuḫ of the land of Iamḫad came as auxiliary troops (to rescue

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95 Yadin et al., 1989: 292–293; Mazar, 1997b.

96 Yadin et al., 1958: 77–78, pl. XC; Yadin et al., 1960: 99–106, 135–137; Yadin et al., 1989: 15, 21–22, 129, pls. CCXXI–CCLXXVIII, CCXCI–CCXCIV.

97 Gershuny, 1981: 37–41.

98 Campbell, 2002: 173–174, 202, 204, 207–201.

99 Dever et al., 1970: 22–23; Dever et al., 1974: 48, 110–113; Dever, 1986: 50–51.

100 Dothan, 1971: 79–83; Dothan / Porat, 1993: 35–46.

101 E.g. RIME 2 E2.1.2.5, E2.1.2.6, E2.1.4.6; RIME 4: E4.2.8.7, E4.2.13.3, E4.2.14.14, E4.6.8.2; and see specific examples below.

102 Hamblin, 2006: 73–76.

> him) and in the city of Samānum the tribes gathered together against him, but by means of (his) mighty weapon he defeated these three kings of […] He vanquished their troops and their auxiliaries and inflicted a defeat on them. He heaped up their dead bodies. He tore down their walls and made them into mounds of rubble."[103]

The best example is a tablet that discusses the social measures enacted by a king of Isin, probably Enlil-bāni:

> "You make (the land) peaceful. In the rebellious land, you destroy the wall of the city that does not […] at your command. You put them in fetters at your feet."[104]

Notably, the practice was not unique to rebellious cities: in several cases it was used for cities conquered for the first time, probably as a preventive measure.[105]

An alternative suggestion is to interpret the destruction of city walls mentioned in the texts as the sacking of the cities themselves.[106] This view could also be corroborated by several inscriptions:[107]

> "Rīmuš, [k]in[g] of the wor[ld], was victor[iou]s over Umma and KI.AN in battle and struck down 8,900 men. He [took] 3,540 captives. Further, he captured En-x, governor of Umma, and Lugal-KA, governor of KI.AN. Further, he conquered their two cities and destroyed the walls of both of them. Further, he expelled 3,600 men from their two cities and annihilated them."[108]

The practice appears in textual and iconographic Egyptian sources as well and was used for similar purposes.[109]

The destruction of fortifications makes the city more vulnerable and facilitates its conquest. Such cities are less likely to engage in conflict. Furthermore, an unfortified city could be invaded by groups from neighboring cities or by groups of raiders. For these reasons, whoever

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[103] RIME 4: E4.6.8.2.

[104] RIME 4: E4.1.10.1001.

[105] E.g. RIME 2: E2.1.1.1, E2.1.1.2, E2.1.1.11.

[106] Baker, 2014: 47–48.

[107] And see also RIME 2: E2.1.2.1, E2.1.2.2, E2.1.2.3, E2.1.2.4; occurs also in the case of other rulers: RIME 3/2: E3/2.1.4.3 and possibly RIME 4: E4.3.6.11, but here it is said that the land was turned into ruin heaps and not the city itself.

[108] RIME 2: E2.1.2.2.

[109] Hasel, 1998; Moreno Garcia, 2010.

chose this strategy probably had the ability to ensure that the ruler invests the necessary means in defortifying the city, to prevent its refortification in the future, but also to make sure that the now vulnerable cities would not be attacked by other cities or by groups of raiders. To achieve this, a certain presence of the conqueror near those cities would be required. Thus, when such a phenomenon is seen in many sites, one may assume that it is the result of the activity of a large, probably imperial, force, which could dominate the entire region.

Discussion: New Light on Historical Processes

Most of the previous reconstructions of historical processes relied on the mere event of destruction to correlate it with historical sources. The new insights suggest that conflict did not necessarily end in destruction and that when it did, the reasons for the destruction of a city could be identified. These notions allow a new examination of processes that took place in the Southern Levant.

For the discussion below to be complete, another phenomenon should be noted: sites that suffered a rapid abandonment, as indicated by vast quantities of restorable pottery and other artifacts, but present no evidence of fire. For the sake of convenience, we designate this phenomenon as a "type 4 destruction" (although they did not necessarily suffer physical destruction).

Two case studies are briefly discussed: that of the end of the LBA and that of the Iron IB–IIA transition. The first case is presented in order to demonstrate how an observation of the patterns of destruction makes it possible to detect and better describe long-term processes, at times centuries long.[110] In the LBA the Southern Levant was home to semi-autonomous Canaanite city-states, which paid tax to and were ruled by Egypt. The Eastern Mediterranean enjoyed a flourishing trade network. A few Egyptian garrison cities and citadels are known from this period, most notably Beth Shean, Aphek, Jaffa, Tel Mor and Deir el-Balaḥ. The Canaanite cities constantly engaged in conflicts and disputes among themselves and frequently called upon Egypt for help. The territorial expansion of the Hittite empire in the north, as well as the activity of the Ḫapiru and the Shasu, contributed to the region's instability.[111] In the late

[110] This case was discussed in greater detail in Kreimerman, 2017a.

[111] Naʾaman, 2000; Morris, 2005; Panitz-Cohen, 2013.

second millennium BCE, the Bronze Age city-states were degraded and later collapsed. This process is well known throughout the Mediterranean, in the collapse of the Mycenaean, Minoan, Hittite societies, and in this respect, the Canaanite society of the Southern Levant is part of a broader process.

Many studies in recent years have attempted to account for these processes.[112] To understand the process of collapse, we should start from a relatively stable period, the LBA IIA (the fourteenth and early thirteenth centuries BCE). Only a few destructions are known from this period (Fig. 2), making it difficult to discuss patterns. Nonetheless, several observations are possible. First, Egyptian centers such as Beth Shean and Jaffa were left unharmed. The most common destruction type in the period, type 3, appears in a few sites that remained fortified in the LBA, such as Hazor XIV, Shechem XIII, Tell Abu Hawam VB and Ashdod XVII. Given the discussion above, these destructions should be associated with a large imperial force which could both subdue these prominent cities and dominate the region after the cities were defortified. Considering that the dominant force in the region in the LBA IIA was the Egyptian empire it seems most reasonable that these destructions were the result of Egyptian intervention. These two observations show that the Egyptians were capable of controlling the region effectively. More violent destructions (type 1) were found in the south in the Shephelah region, only in small sites like Tel Batash VII, Beth Shemesh 9 and perhaps Tell Beit Mirsim C1 and Tel Ḥarasim V.[113] Although, a bit speculative, perhaps these destructions could be associated with the affairs described in the Amarna Letters in relation to region.[114]

The LBA IIB (the thirteenth century BCE) is marked by a considerable change in modes of destruction (Fig. 3). A new destruction type (type 2) dominates the region and is found in most sites, including some Egyptian centers, such as Beth Shean, Aphek and Tel Mor. Only one site – Gezer XV – exhibited a different type of destruction (type 3).

Most of these sites, with the notable exception of Hazor, were reconstructed in the subsequent phase (LBA III/Iron Age IA – early twelfth century BCE), with many suffering another wave of destructions. This time three destruction types were dominant (Fig. 4): type 2 continues to appear in the northern sites, while two new types emerge. Type 1 was

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[112] Most recently Yasur-Landau, 2010; Cline, 2014; Knapp / Manning, 2016.

[113] See Kreimerman, 2017a: table 9.2. for references.

[114] EA 63–64, 251, 281–284, 292–294, 297–301, 303–314, 316, 323, 330–336, 338–339.

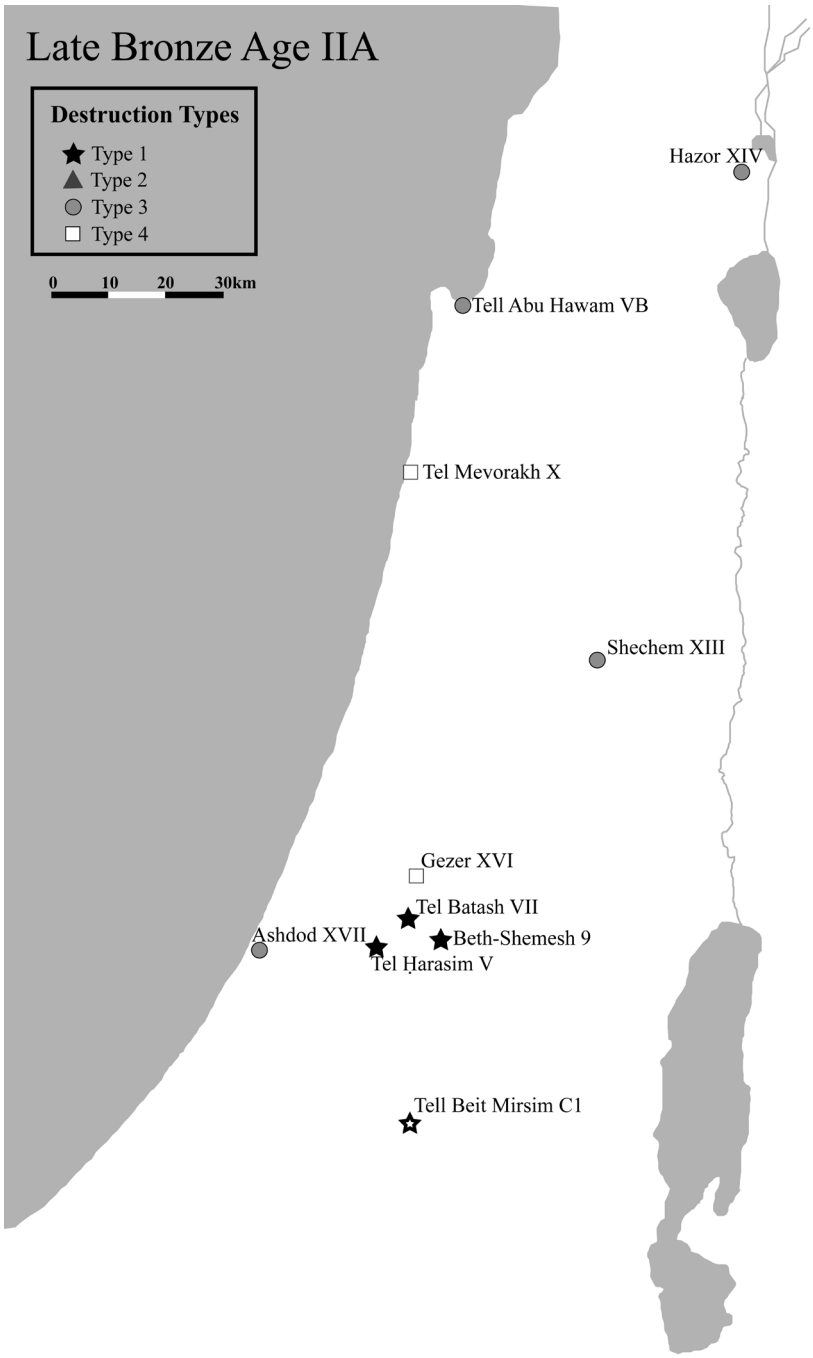

Fig. 2: Destruction layers of the Late Bronze Age IIA. Solid symbols – data of good integrity, hollow symbols – partial data / Excavations were carried out with outdated methods.

found in the south, most noticeably at Azekah and Lachish VI, while in the coastal plain sites, such as Aphek X11, Gezer XIV, Tel Mor VI, Tell es-Ṣafi E4a, Tel Ṣippor IV and Qubur el-Walaydah VIII, type 4 appears.[115]

A few observations are in order. From the above analysis, it seems that the type 2 destruction aimed at unseating those at the top of the social order and should be attributed either to struggles between neighboring cities, or to activities of the Ḫapiru, who raided the settlements. These multiple destructions are evidence of a crisis. This crisis is probably the result of two factors: the fact that due to Egyptian policy, most of the cities were unfortified and thus were easy targets for raiders, and the ineffectiveness of the Egyptian military, which was unable to provide adequate protection to all the cities at the same time. As mentioned above, the Egyptian grip on the region was very loose, and consequently, even Egyptian sites were hit.

In the coastal plain, in contrast, a different, less violent, destruction – type 4 – was evident. These sites were rebuilt, becoming the Philistine cities of the Iron Age, their material culture combining local and foreign elements.[116] It seems, therefore, that the Philistine settlement of these sites was not a very violent process. Some inhabitants evidently fled, but the sites were not burned. Indeed, as mentioned above, burning a site makes no sense if one plans to settle it later.

At the eastern border of what was later to become Philistia, i.e., at Lachish, Azekah and Tel Seraʿ, the most violent type of destruction – type 1 – was observed. These sites were abandoned, and an occupation gap of over a century is evident. From the above discussion, it seems that the destruction of these sites was intended to bring about their abandonment. These destruction events could be roughly correlated with the retreat of the Egyptian Empire from the region.[117] Once the Egyptians were gone, who could both destroy these sites and prevent their rehabitation for at least a century? The location of these sites on the border of Philistia suggests that it was probably the Philistines who were responsible for this process, possibly in an effort to drive out the local population and to create a buffer zone between the Philistines and the Canaanite and proto-Israelite population.

Now the process that led to the end of the Late Bronze Age may perhaps be reconstructed. In the LBA IIA, the strong Egyptian grip on the region led to its relative stability. In the LBA IIB, the Egyptian grip on the area

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[115] See Kreimerman, 2017a, table 9.4 for references.

[116] Dothan, 2000; Yasur-Landau, 2010.

[117] Mazar 2008, 87–88; Ussishkin, 2008.

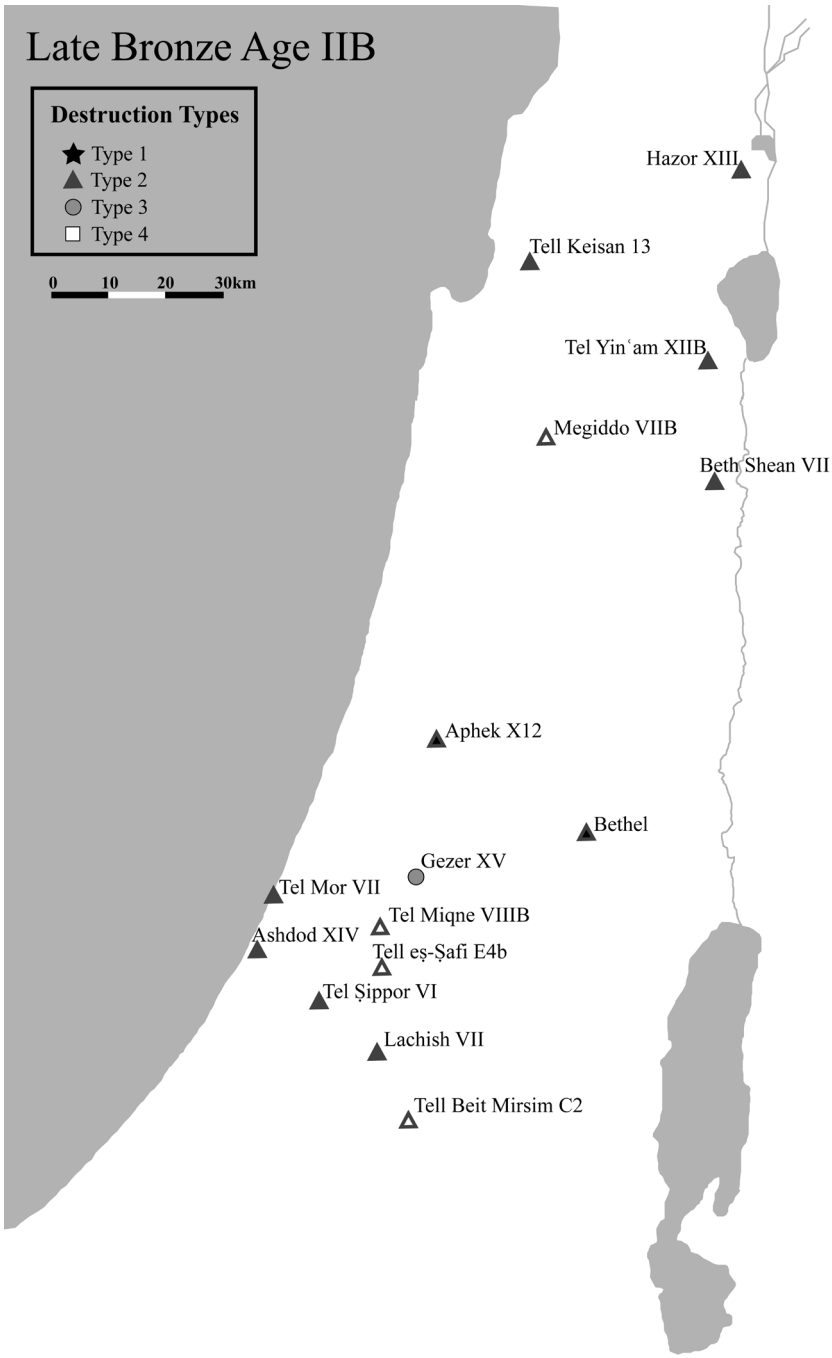

Fig. 3: Destruction layers of the Late Bronze Age IIB. Solid symbols – data of good integrity, hollow symbols – partial data / Excavations were carried out with outdated methods.

weakened, giving rise to a crisis, most evident in type 2 destructions. In the LBA III, there continues to be evidence for the crisis in the north, as type 2 destructions still appear there. Those sites were later reconstructed as Canaanite cities. In the coastal plain two new types of destructions – types 1 and 4 – symbolized a new process, involving the settlement of the Sea Peoples (and the collapse of the Canaanite culture) in the coastal plain[118] and the destruction of prominent Canaanite cities along the border of this area, probably to create a buffer zone and to prevent future hostilities.

The second case study is brought here to demonstrate how the above notions may contribute to an understanding of a rapid process of collapse. The Iron Age IB is considered to be a period of revival from the collapse of the political systems in the LBA. The new cities established in the northern valleys exhibit great continuity with the cultural traits of the LBA Canaanite city-states that were destroyed. The Canaanite cities of the coastal plain were replaced by new Philistine cities, some – such as Ashkelon, Ekron and Ashdod – equaling or even exceeding the previous Canaanite cities in size.[119] Many small Israelite settlements were built in the highlands. Unfortunately, historical sources regarding this period are scarce, and the most important source for an understanding of the period is the archaeological record.[120]

The Iron Age IB came to a very rapid and violent end, evident in type 1 destructions (Fig. 5). In contrast to the relatively peaceful period of the early and mid-eleventh century BCE with only a few destructions,[121] within a relatively short timespan, in the late eleventh–early tenth century BCE, many of the most important Canaanite and Philistine cities were destroyed. There is no scholarly consensus on the cause of these destructions. Some scholars claim that they were due to Israelite and Judahite invasions as part of the state formation of these territorial kingdoms in the early Iron Age IIA.[122] Some argue that they were caused by a powerful earthquake,[123] and others have suggested a combination of these two factors.[124]

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[118] Bunimovitz / Lederman, 2011; Faust / Katz, 2011.

[119] Yasur-Landau, 2010 .

[120] As mentioned above, reliance upon the narrative of these events provided in the Hebrew Bible is problematic.

[121] Mazar, 1980: 21–30; Mazow, 2005; Ortiz, 2000.

[122] Finkelstein, 2002; 2013; Harrison, 2004; Knauf, 2000; Mazar, 1957; Yadin, 1970.

[123] Cline, 2011; Lamon / Shipton, 1939.

[124] Fiaccavento, 2014.

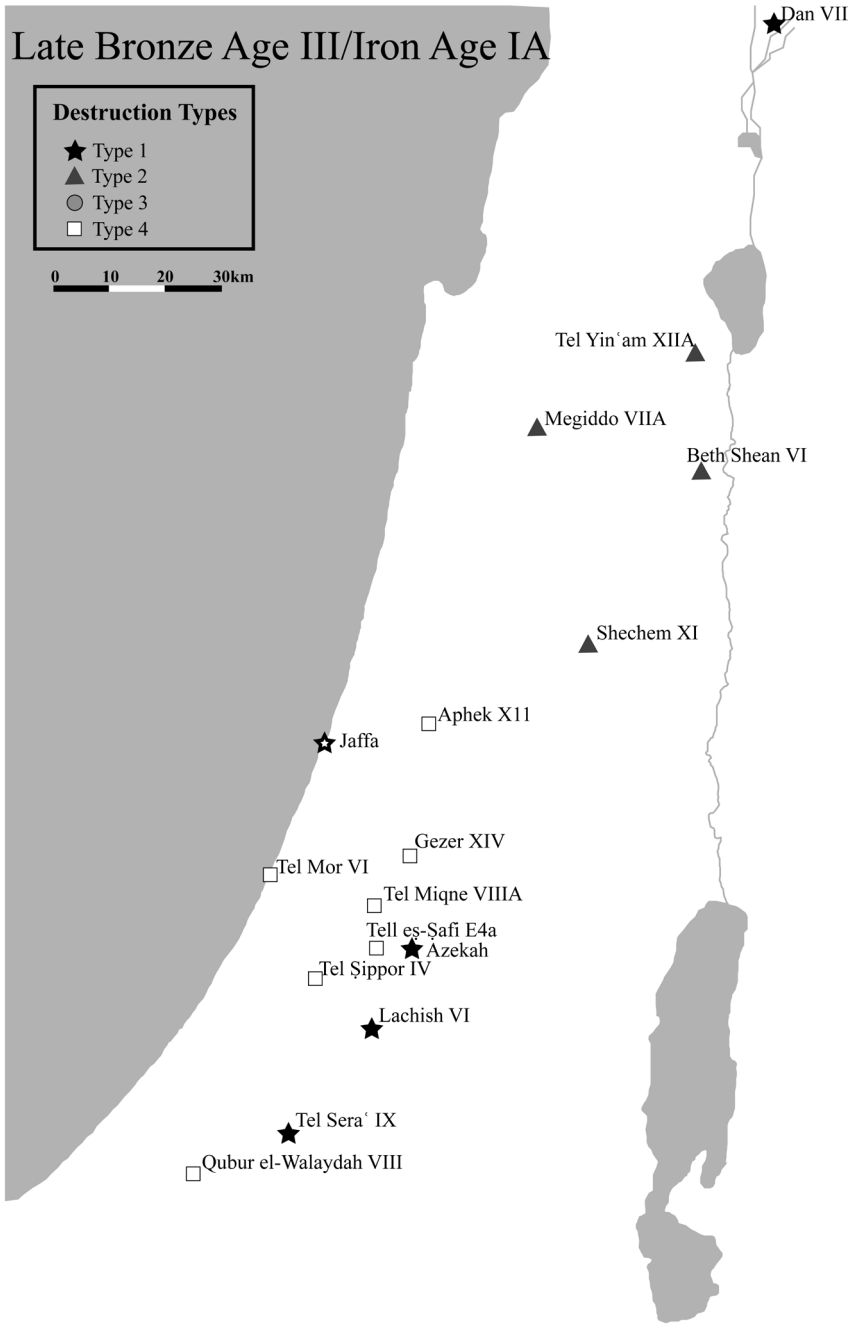

Fig. 4: Destruction layers of the Late Bronze Age III/Iron Age IA. Solid symbols – data of good integrity, hollow symbols – partial data / Excavations were carried out with outdated methods.

The uniformity of destructions is noteworthy. One does not find considerable variability between the sites with regard to the focal points of the fire or the presence (or, more commonly, the absence) of long-range weapons or skeletons. The one exception is Megiddo VIA,[125] where both skeletons and a few hoards were found; clearly, this site experienced a more sudden destruction than the others.[126] As mentioned above, these destructions occurred within a relatively limited timespan. It seems, therefore, that they were the result of a single process that lasted no more than a few decades, whereas Megiddo VIA suggests a different, more violent, destruction. Furthermore, it is possible that in an event of an earthquake, the residents of a settlement would have preferred to leave the site and settle elsewhere, but an earthquake is unlikely to have brought about the abandonment of an entire region. The possibility of struggles between neighboring cities should be rejected as well. A struggle between two cities could lead to the destruction of one of them, but could hardly explain such a multiplicity of destructions. It seems, therefore, that the destruction of these cities was executed in order to drive out their populations, probably as part of a planned and ambitious move. Whoever destroyed these settlements could not merely capture them but also ensure that the population would not return. It may be speculated that the location of the type 1 destructions within the borders of the future kingdom of Israel reflects conflicts that took place between different entities during the formation processes of this kingdom. The early kingdom could have driven out a large portion of the population and have ascertained that it would not return. The fact that some sites, such as Reḥov and Tell Qiri, were spared suggests that the evolving entity enjoyed the cooperation of some local cities, which consequently remained settled and exhibit great degrees of continuity into the Iron Age IIA.

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[125] Harrison, 2004 .

[126] Hoards usually contained a family's most precious possessions; consequently, if there was little time to escape, hoards would likely be the only thing taken. Unless the hoards are foundation deposits or ritual burials (Knapp, 1988), their presence indicates either that the dwellers did not have time to rescue anything or that they were unable to reach the home in order to evacuate them.

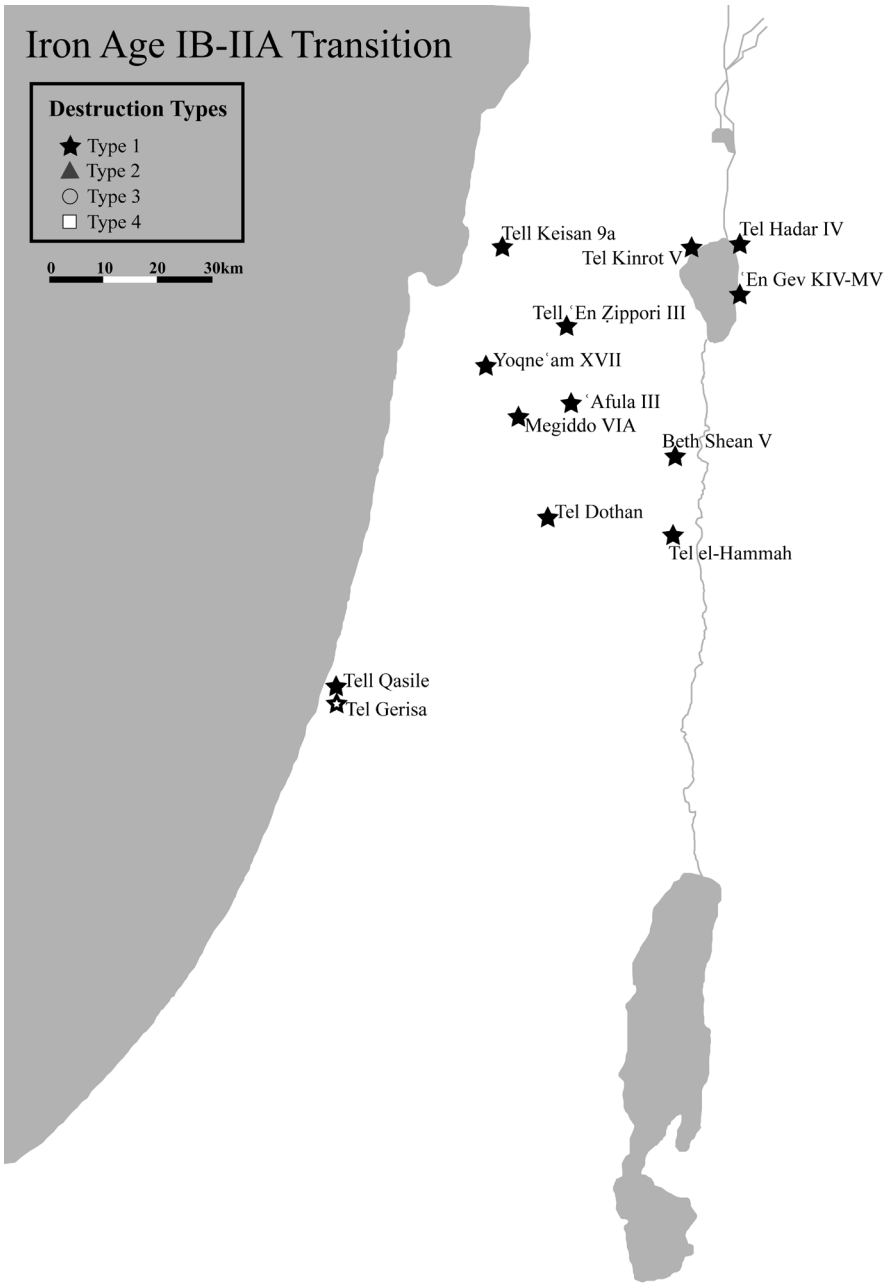

Fig. 5: Destruction layers of the late Iron Age IB. Solid symbols – data of good integrity, hollow symbols – partial data / Excavations were carried out with outdated methods.

Conclusions

The destruction of cities was in many cases a well-planned action intended to achieve specific goals. A consideration of the archaeological and literary evidence in conjunction enables, to some extent, the identification of these goals.

Three destruction types that appear during the Bronze Age were discussed. The first is characterized by a complete burning of a city and consequent abandonment and could be interpreted as an action intended to drive out its residents and prevent future habitation. The literary sources suggest that this process was sometimes accompanied with a ritual of dedicating the city to a god or of a curse.

The second type is a destruction that was concentrated in the public buildings. This type of destruction is not well attested in the literary sources, but archaeological considerations indicate that it was employed in order to demolish the social order in the city. It was used by groups that had the ability to subdue and destroy a city but were either unable or unwilling to govern it – perhaps groups of nomads and raiders. This could also account for the rarity of the reference to this type of destruction in the literary sources.

The third type discussed is the destruction of city walls (slighting). This strategy was mostly employed by imperial forces and was intended to render the city more vulnerable and to prevent future rebellion. From the literary sources, it is known that this action was commonly accompanied by the replacement of the ruler.

Two case studies were examined in light of the new insights: the collapse of the political system of the LBA and the Iron Age IB–IIA transition in the Southern Levant. It was shown that the new notions proposed in respect to the destruction methods could be applied to suggest a reconstruction of the events and to identify the goals of the destruction. The first case showed that the beginning of the crisis process that ultimately led to the collapse of the LBA political system should be dated to the LBA IIB. Furthermore, it is possible to draw a distinction between LB III/Iron IA sites that were destroyed because of the crisis that began in the previous period and those that were destroyed by a different, new, process. The second case showed that all the destructions in the transition between the Iron Age IB and IIA were probably the outcome of a single well-planned process that was intended to drive out the local population.

Acknowledgements

My thanks are extended to Prof. Y. Garfinkel and I. Weissbein for their useful comments and advice on this paper. I would also like to thank Tsipi Kuper-Blau and Matthew Richardson for the English editing. The study was conducted in the Mandel School for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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The Babylonian Temple Communities and Greek Culture in the Hellenistic Period

Geert De Breucker

After Alexander the Great's conquest in 331 BC and the establishment of the Seleucid Empire in the last decade of the fourth century, Babylonia became part of the Hellenistic world. Greek culture, which had already penetrated Mesopotamia, became the culture of the King and the new ruling elite and exerted, therefore, a great attraction. How did the Babylonian temple communities deal with this hegemonic culture? And how did they attempt to redefine themselves in this new political as well as cultural setting? This paper suggests answers to some of these questions.

Historical research is, of course, restricted to the sources that have come down to us and their limitations. We must constantly bear in mind that the extant sources nearly always provide us with a partial and often biased view. The history of Hellenistic Babylonia forms no exception.[1] Admittedly, we are fortunate that thousands of cuneiform tablets dating back to the Hellenistic period have been discovered and still more are expected to be excavated. However, other sources written on parchment or wooden writing boards, have inevitably not survived the Mesopotamian climate. The cuneiform tablets were produced by just one social class, the people connected to the traditional Babylonian temples.

Babylonia had been a multi-ethnic society for centuries and, apart from the native population, many peoples, including Judeans and Arabs, had their home there. None of these ethnic groups are well documented.[2]

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[1] For an overview of the history of Hellenistic Babylonia; see Clancier, 2007.

[2] We have some evidence of Judeans living in Hellenistic Babylonia. According to Josephus, Antiochus III moved 2,000 Judean families from Mesopotamia and Babylonia to Anatolia (AJ 12.247–249). As for the presence of Arabs, the *Astronomical Diaries* record Arabs roaming around and raiding the country for the last third of the second century BC. In 125 they even made a breach in the wall of Babylon (AD -124A

The same holds for native Babylonians living in villages in rural areas or small towns.

Further, the corpus of cuneiform texts itself suffers from two major limitations. First, the bulk of the material derives from only two cities, Babylon and Uruk, in southern Mesopotamia. This implies that, when we speak of "Babylonian temple communities", we usually mean those from Babylon and Uruk.[3] In Babylon the locus of that community was the Esagil, the main temple complex, which was dedicated to the city's patron deity, Bel-Marduk; in Uruk it was the Bit-Reš, the temple of Anu and Antu. Secondly, the texts mainly pertain to a limited set of concerns: the organisation of the cult, the management of the temple and scholarly and scientific activities, especially in the field of astronomy (celestial observations, predictions, calculations etc.).[4] As part of their activities the scribes recorded contemporary events and composed historiographical texts, which provide information of great historical value.[5] Cuneiform writing was thus restricted to the realm of religion and science and preserved by the members of the temple communities.[6] It is also worth noting that cuneiform was not exclusively linked to the medium of clay tablets;

'rev.' 5'). For the time of Alexander the Great Arabs are mentioned in broken context (AD -329 'rev. 2').

[3] For an overview of the extant cuneiform tablets for each city; see Oelsner, 2002.

[4] The science of astronomy and related fields was booming in this period and the Babylonian astronomers, all connected to the temple, made great progresses in determining and calculating the periodicity of celestial phenomena. Cuneiform writing was seemingly the medium to record their activities, undoubtedly because the astronomers worked at the service of the temple. The largest part of the cuneiform tablets deriving from Babylon deal with astronomy. A still useful classification of the text types has been provided by Sachs, 1948. The huge corpus of tablets containing day-by-day celestial observations, the so-called *Astronomical Diaries*, have been published by Sachs / Hunger, 1988–1996 and Hunger / Sachs, 2001. Except for one tablet, they all originate from Babylon. For an edition of the Procedure Texts; see Ossendrijver, 2012.

[5] The scribes recorded contemporary events in the historical sections of the *Astronomical Diaries* – mainly events that affected the temple community of the Esagil; see also Del Monte, 1997 and Pirngruber, 2013. A small group of chronicles from Babylon dealing with contemporary history has been preserved (BCHP, preliminary publication by Finkel / Van der Spek, 2006). These chronicles and the historical sections of the *Diaries* are intertwined, but the exact nature of their relationship is unclear.

[6] For Babylon: Boiy, 2004: 264–303; for Uruk: Clancier, 2011.

cuneiform texts were also written on wooden writing boards and even on parchment, both perishable materials in Mesopotamia.[7]

The cuneiform evidence could give the false impression that the temples were precincts of an age-old civilisation, culturally untouched by an ever changing outside world. In fact, at this period Akkadian was a dead language, even for the members of the temple community. Aramaic was their mother tongue and the vernacular in Babylonia, used in everyday life. This West-Semitic language was also used in the temple, as the presence of the *sepiru*, "parchment scribe (of Aramaic)", proves.[8] Aramaic had penetrated to the very heart of the temple itself, as concretely demonstrated in Uruk. In the Irigal, which was dedicated to the goddess Ishtar, an Aramaic inscription was written on glazed bricks on the lower row of the main cella, giving the name of Anu-uballit, whose other name was Kephalon.[9] He very probably restored the temple around 200 BC.

Since Aramaic was written on perishable material, only a few traces in that language have survived for Babylonia, e.g. some ostraca and epitaphs on cuneiform tablets.[10] We should assume the existence of a vigorous Aramaic written culture and literature in Babylonia and that the members of the temple communities participated in it.

As for religion, at first glance the worship of the traditional Babylonian deities continued without fundamental changes. This might be too simple a conclusion. The cuneiform sources dealing with cult practices represent the 'official' religion and traditional theology. They do not necessarily reflect actual beliefs and practices. The text corpus may not have changed, but its interpretation could. We have some indications of altered practices. The colophon of a tablet from Uruk hints at a rearrangement of the rites in the city's main temples.[11] Archaeological evidence shows that in the

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[7] We know of the existence of both writing materials through references in cuneiform tablets. For the use of wooden writing boards (Akkadien: *le'u*); see e.g. MacGinnis, 2002. Frahm (2005) listed references to *magallatu* ("parchment roll"). I do not go into the debate about whether the Sumero-Akkadian written on the parchment rolls was in cuneiform script or a transliteration in Aramaic or Greek alphabet.

[8] Clancier, 2005.

[9] Bowman, 1939: 231–233 and Falkenstein, 1941: 31. For Anu-uballit/Kephalon; see below.

[10] Oelsner, 1986: 245–250; 2006; Fitmyer / Kaufman, 1992: 51.

[11] TU 38; see Hunger, 1968: 47 no. 107. The colophon states that the tablet comprises the ordinances and rites of the Urukean temples and was a copy of a wooden tablet that was written according to the tablets that Kidin-Anu, the high priest of Bit-Reš, had seen and

Ebabbar temple in Larsa camels were sacrificed, which presumably was not originally a Babylonian, but Arabian practice.[12] However, it remains uncertain whether Babylonians had adopted the practice of sacrificing camels or Arabs had access to the Ebabbar complex and could sacrifice according to their own customs. It is noteworthy that all tablets describing the New Year Festival in Babylon and Uruk – the most important religious feast – date from the Hellenistic period. This could, of course, be mere coincidence, but it might point to an increased interest in the festival in that era, as festivals and processions were important tools to mark a group's identity in the Hellenistic world.

In the Hellenistic period the Babylonian temples remained important institutions, politically as well as economically, which explains why they interacted with the Seleucid administration. Their revenues attracted the interest of the royal treasury. Their administrators – the high priest and the temple assembly (*kiništu*) – not only represented the temples, but also the local population connected to them.[13] The current view is that the Seleucid Empire was held together by a network of personal ties between the king and local elites.[14] In the native Babylonian cities these local elites belonged to the temple community. Depending on the situation the king could change his strategies to control a particular region or city. He could have chosen – and very likely did choose – a variety of strategies for dealing with Babylon and Uruk.[15]

This network of personal ties does not mean that there was a balance in power between king and temple. In fact, the temples were completely dependent on the Crown, but this was not a novelty of the Seleucid Empire. Already in the Neo-Babylonian period the Crown had a representative

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copied in Elam during the joint reign of Seleucus I and Antiochus I (295/4–281 BC). This statement could be interpreted as the forged legitimation of a cultic reform.

[12] Beaulieu, 2008: 215.

[13] *Šatammu* (high priest) and *kiništu* are attested for the cities of Babylon, Cutha and Nippur. In Uruk the high priest was called *rab ša reš ali (ša bit ilani) ša Uruk* ("head of the officials of the city (of the temples) of Uruk"); see Monerie, 2012: 332 and n. 16. In one unpublished tablet from the Louvre (AO 6498), this title is combined with that of *šatammu* (Monerie, 2012: 335 n. 20).

[14] Ramsey, 2011; Strootman, 2003 (on the relations between kings and cities). Ma (2003) introduced the term "role playing". The Hellenistic kings played different roles depending on the subjects they had to interact with (e.g. Greek *poleis*, native temple institutions).

[15] For Babylon: Clancier, 2012; for Uruk: Monerie, 2012; see also Van der Spek 1987.

who supervised temple affairs.[16] For Seleucid Babylonia we find a *paqdu* of the king in Babylon and Uruk and an *episkopos* for Nippur. This royal representative was not necessarily an outsider. On the contrary, in Uruk the *paqdu* Anu-belšunu was a member of the local Ah'ûtu family and a brother of the high priest Anu-uballit/Kephalon.[17] In Nippur the *episkopos* was himself a priest of the god Enlil and belonged to a local family.[18] For Babylon we know of a *zazakku*, a royal official who controlled the financies of the Esagil and was member of the temple community.[19]

The families who provided the high priests and the other high administrators of the temples were in fact entirely dependent on the goodwill and trust of the king. He could promote and demote, appoint and dismiss, as, indeed, he did. A passage in an *Astronomical Diary* for 125/124 BC (thus from the Parthian period) seemingly refers to the appointment of a new *šatammu* in Babylon.[20] In Uruk the *rab ša reš ali* Diophantos of the Ah'ûtu family, who inherited his function from his father and grandfather, was replaced by a member of another local family, the Hunzû.[21] This reminds us of the fate of the Judean high priest Onias III, whom Antiochus IV replaced with his brother Jason in 174 BC.

Despite this instance of royal omnipotence, it was in the interest of the Seleucids to maintain smooth relations with the temples. We see that the early Seleucids supported the rebuilding of temples.[22] Kings and their representatives visited the Esagil in Babylon and were welcomed by the high priest and the assembly.[23] Antiochus III (222–187) even participated in the New Year Festival in the same city in 205 BC, thus fulfilling his

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16 Jursa, 2007: 76–77.

17 Monerie, 2012: 333–335.

18 Enlil-uballit, *episkopos*, *nešakku*-priest of Enlil, son of Nidintu-Enlil, descendant of Aba-Enlil-dari (Van der Spek, 1992: 250–254, Text 1, l. 2–3).

19 AD -168A 'rev, 12'–13'); see Boiy, 2004: 210.

20 AD -124 'rev.' 21'; see Boiy, 2004: 201.

21 Monerie, 2012: 347 and n. 54. Diophantos was replaced in the period between 173 and 168 BC, i.e. during the reign of Antiochus IV (175–164).

22 In the only extant cuneiform royal inscription, the so-called *Antiochus Cylinder* from Borsippa, Antiochus I (281–261) commemorates that he repaired the Ezida temple in Borsippa in 268 BC. In her study of the text, Stevens (2014) put forward that Antiochus did not just conform himself to the requirements of Babylonian kingship. The text was actually a sophisticated interplay between local traditions and Seleucid imperial ideology.

23 Strootman 2013: 78–83.

duties as king of Babylonia.[24] The kings granted fields to the temples (but could as easily confiscate them).

As far as we can judge from the extant sources, the Babylonian temple communities never participated in rebellions against the Seleucid Crown. After his decisive victory at Gaugamela in 331 BC Alexander the Great conquered Babylonia without any further fighting and, according to the classical sources, the priests and inhabitants of Babylon gave him a festive welcome. After the sudden death of the Macedonian in 323 BC Babylonia was for some two decades the scene of warfare, battles and campaigns until Seleucus I finally established his empire at the end of the century and peace returned in Babylonia. The Seleucids ruled Mesopotamia for some 150 years. In this period, however, they had to deal with rebellious satraps and revolts. Molon and Timarchus, both governors of the Upper Satrapies – the eastern territories of the Seleucid empire – rebelled and ruled for a short period over Babylonia.[25] In 262 BC measures were taken in Babylon "for protection against the enemy".[26] It must remain unclear who is meant. In the same city the garrison of the royal palace (i.e. the citadel) rebelled or mutinied in the years 230 BC.[27] Revolts of another social group, the "people of the land" are attested for 256 and 163 BC.[28] These people can very likely be identified with the *laoi*, as they are called in Seleucid and Ptolemaic sources, i.e. native peasants. The motives for these mutinies and revolts are unknown, but are perhaps financial (in the case of the soldiers) or socio-economic (in the case of the *laoi*) rather than political.

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[24] AD -204C rev. 14–19 and UE 1–2.

[25] Molon rebelled against the young Antiochus III in the years 222–220 BC and Timarchus usurped power after the death of Antiochus V and the accession of Demetrius I in 161 BC. Both rebellions are known by the accounts of ancient historians; see Boiy 2004: 154–155 and 163–164.

[26] AD -261B 'obv. 1'–3' and -261C 'rev. 11'–12'.

[27] In 238 BC the troops of the royal palace of Babylon fought against the "guard troops of the king" (AD -237 'obv. 13'). In 235 BC a general probably gathered many troops in order to fight against one commander of a military unit, which had revolted against the king Seleucus (AD -234 obv.' 13').

[28] In 256 BC they fought in the vicinity of the Esagil in Babylon. The name of their opponent has not been preserved in the *Diary* (AD -255 'rev. 15'). In 163 BC they fought against the *politai* (BCHP 14 obv. 1–12 and AD -162C rev. 11–17).

After the death of Antiochus II in 246 BC a Ptolemaic army invaded Babylonia during the Third Syrian War and occupied the city of Babylon.[29] While besieging the city's palace (citadel), the commander of the Ptolemaic troops, Xanthippus, went to the Esagil and performed sacrifices.[30] By doing this the commander obviously aimed to legitimise the Ptolemaic conquest. We may assume that confronted with the Egyptian army the temple administrators had no other choice than receiving the Ptolemaic general and behaved as opportunistically as in 331 BC, when Alexander the Great arrived, or when the Arsacids conquered Babylonia for the first time in 141 BC. This take-over marked the beginning of another period of political instability plunging Babylonia once more into war and battle.

Warfare and military conflicts in and around Babylonia as well as the presence of armies were by far the most important causes of price increases and economic decline, as research of the Babylonian market prices has shown.[31] This is clearly demonstrated by a passage in an *Astronomical Diary* relating to the First Syrian War, in which Antiochus I attempted in vain to conquer Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, then both belonging to the Ptolemaic realm. The Diary records for 273 BC that the satrap of Babylonia sent silver, cloth, goods and probably utensils from Seleucia on the Tigris and Babylon to Antiochus I, who campaigned in Coele-Syria and Phoenicia. The military operations caused in Babylonia an economic crisis, as the Diary records high prices for barley, purchases were made with (inferior) copper coins and famine occurred in the land.[32]

At the same time Babylonia was not a 'mercenary economy' in the sense that numerous native Babylonians were hired as mercenaries at the service of the Seleucids or other rulers – a characteristic phenomenon of Hellenistic warfare. Direct evidence indeed lacks. But if native Babylonians actually served as soldiers, their number must have been small. Unlike e.g. Cretans being renowned archers or Median horsemen Babylonians had no specific military specialism. And it may be assumed that they could rather easily earn their living in other sectors, like agriculture.

The language of the army was Greek. It was also the language of the Seleucid administration, as Greek inscriptions on clay *bullae* from

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[29] The events are recorded in a chronicle dating from the Hellenistic period, BCHP 11.

[30] BCHP 11 obv. 14'–rev. 4'.

[31] Van der Spek 2000; Pirngruber 2017: 210–211.

[32] AD -273B 'rev. 29'–33' and UE 1'–2'.

Uruk and Nippur[33] as well as the use of Greek legal terms in cuneiform documents clearly demonstrate.[34] It was the language by means of which the Seleucid administration and the representatives of the temple community and the local population interacted with each other. We may safely assume that the royal letters sent to the high priest and the temple assembly, mentioned in the *Astronomical Diaries*, were written in Greek, not in Aramaic. These interactions with the royal administration facilitated the contacts of the temple community with Greek language and culture. However, it does not necessarily mean that the local elites themselves knew Greek, as it is conceivable that interpreters mediated between them and the Crown.

Apart from the use of Greek in the Seleucid administration, how widespread were that language and Greek culture in Babylonia? How many Greeks actually dwelt in the country and how easy was it to have interactions with bearers of Greek culture? Ethnic Greeks and Macedonians, e.g. veterans and colonists, mainly lived in the newly founded cities, such as Seleucia on the Tigris, "the city of kingship which is on the Tigris and the King's Canal", as it is called in the cuneiform sources. Archaeological survey has shown that the region of the Diyala River (NE of Seleucia) was urbanised and developed agriculturally in the Hellenistic period, very probably in order to settle Greco–Macedonian migrants.[35] Another newly founded settlement may be Antioch on the Ishtar–Canal.[36] But Greeks also dwelt in the native cities of Babylonia. It is certain that Greek officials and a Greek garrison were stationed in Babylon. In that city Greeks had their

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[33] The *bullae* from Uruk record taxes and the date involved; see Rostovtzeff, 1932: 26–48. They have been discovered in the city's main temple Bit-Reš, which proves the link between Seleucid administration and the temple. For the *bullae* of Nippur, which also deal with taxation: SEG 44.1302.

[34] In a contract from Uruk dealing with a temple prebend the term *graphè*, "written document" (Akk.: *kur–ra–pe–e*) occurs (OECT 9 42, l. 5). For the interpretation of *kurrape* as the rendering of Greek γραφή; see McEwan, 1984: 240–241. A contract dealing with the long lease of temple land refers to a *diagramma*, "regulation": "in accordance with what is written in the *diagramma*" (NCTU 1, l. 34; see Van der Spek, 1995: 227–234).

[35] Adams, 1965: 61–68.

[36] The name is attested only once. It is the locality where a cuneiform contract had been drawn up in 270 BC (YOS 20. 20; see Doty, 1977: 193–196). It is probably a settlement in the vicinity of Uruk. Van der Spek (1987: 73) assumes that it was an alternative name for Uruk, used by the Greek inhabitants.

own quarter on the hill, now called Homera.[37] A Greek community with civic rights and its own institutions is attested from the time of Antiochus IV onwards. It is now generally accepted that this king settled Greeks in Babylon and gave them the status of *politai*.[38] A Babylonian chronicle notes for the month Tašritu (October/November) 163 BC the following:

> "The Greeks (*Yamannayani*), as they are called, the *p*[*olitai*], who in the past at the command of king Antiochus [had entered] Baby[lon] and who anoint with oil just like the *pol*[*itai*] who are in Seleucia, the royal city, on the Tigris and the King's Canal […]"[39]

The description of these Greeks as the ones "who anoint with oil" refers to their activities in the gymnasium and may be interpreted as a "cultural marker".[40] It is plausible that native Babylonians could also obtain Greek civic rights and became *politai*.

The passage is indirect evidence of the existence of a gymnasium in Babylon at the time of Antiochus IV. At Homera a Greek theatre has been excavated, but it is matter of debate whether it dates back to the time of Alexander the Great or whether it was built on the occasion of the settlement of the Greek community under Antiochus IV.[41] After its establishment this community interacted with the royal administration, probably at the expense of local families connected to the Esagil, who saw their political role diminished.[42]

It is impossible to determine the size of the Greco–Macedonian population in the native Babylonian cities. The fact that only a few sources written in Greek have come down to us from these cities cannot be used as an indication that their number was small and the use of Greek very

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[37] Boiy, 2004: 11–12.

[38] Van der Spek, 2009: 107–112; Clancier, 2012: 320–324. On the basis of a fragmentary *Astronomical Diary* (AD -187A 'rev. 9'–10'), Boiy (2004: 207–209) argues that the *politai* existed in Babylon already during the reign of Antiochus III.

[39] BCHP 14 obv. 2–6 (trans. [Van der Spek].)

[40] Note the suggestion of Van Nijf, mentioned by Van der Spek (commentary ad BCHP 14 obv. 4) that the term may refer to the group of the ἀλειφόμενοι (lit. "who anointed themselves"), "youths undergoing gymnastic training". In that case the term designates a social group within the gymnasium and is not used as a cultural marker.

[41] Wetzel / Schmidt / Mallwitz, 1957: 3–22; Van der Spek, 2001; Potts, 2011; Bergamini, 2011.

[42] Clancier, 2012: 315–324; Clancier / Monerie, 2014: 210–224.

restricted.[43] Texts were written on perishable material, like parchment, and, in contrast to Ptolemaic Egypt, have not survived the Mesopotamian climate. The paucity of Greek inscriptions on stone and marble, which were both used as writing materials in the Greek world, can be easily explained: stone was rare in Mesopotamia and marble had to be imported. We can assume that both were re-used for other purposes in later centuries.

The presence of Greeks in the native Babylonian cities is likely to have facilitated Babylonian access to Greek culture. It does not mean, however, that the two groups interacted actively. On the contrary, most probably lived in their own quarters and had few contacts with other ethnic groups.[44] We have one instance where Greek inhabitants of Babylon (or Hellenised locals) were fighting native Babylonians. In 163 BC the *politai* were fighting against the governor of the king and "the people of the land", the *laoi*.[45] It is unknown what sparked off this fighting, but socio-economic or political motives are more probable than cultural ones. According to the sources, the Babylonian temple community was not involved.

The extant cuneiform tablets show plainly that members of the Babylonian temple communities lived in their own native milieu and were the upholders of cuneiform culture. As we have seen, they also interacted with the Seleucid administration. Did these contacts prompt them to conform to Greek culture to some degree and adopt a 'Greek identity'? A comparison with Ptolemaic Egypt may point to an answer. As in Seleucid Babylonia, the traditional temples were important institutions, which the Ptolemies aimed to integrate into their power system. Members of the Egyptian temple communities were, as in Babylonia, the upholders of their age-old native culture. In Ptolemaic Egypt texts from this Egyptian milieu written in Demotic as well as Greek documents have been preserved. They make clear that native Egyptians not only lived in their own cultural milieu, but also moved beyond their cultural boundaries and interacted with Greek culture. In an Egyptian context these Egyptians behaved as bearers of the native culture. They had Egyptian names and wrote in their native language. In a Greek context, like the administration and the army, they used a Greek personal name and wrote in Greek. So depending on context these Egyptians moved between two cultures and had a 'double identity'.[46] For

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[43] For the evidence: Schmidt, 1941 and Oelsner, 1986: 250–258.

[44] Van der Spek, 2005; 2009: 111–112.

[45] BCHP 14 obv. 1–12 and AD -162C rev. 11–17.

[46] Clarysse, 1985; Coussement, 2016.

some Egyptians their Greek identity was merely practical or opportunistic, while others were truly imbued by Greek culture.

We may assume that members of the temple communities in Babylonia also moved between their own and Greek cultures. There is indeed evidence of a 'double identity'. Cuneiform tablets attest native Babylonians bearing a double name – an Akkadian and a Greek one – from the middle of the third century onwards.[47] Two famous examples of Babylonians having a second Greek name are found in two building inscriptions from Uruk, commemorating the restoration of the Bit-Reš. Coincidentally, both restorers bear the same name, Anu-uballit, and belonged to the Ah'ûtu, a prominent local family of Uruk. The first presents himself as "Anu-uballit, son of Anu-iksur, descendant of Ah'ûtu, governor of Uruk, to whom Antiochus, the king of the lands, gave his second name Nikarchos".[48] Anu-uballit (re)built and completed the Bit-Reš and established two types of offerings, "as in the past" in 244 BC. Being governor (*šaknu*) Anu-uballit was the highest official of the Seleucid administration in Uruk – and had very likely also military powers. The second Anu-uballit was the *rab ša reš ali* of Uruk, the high priest. His inscription commemorating the end of his reconstruction works in 201 BC states that he had a second name, Kephalon.[49] Since initiating the (re)building of temples was a royal prerogative, the inscriptions indicate the semi-independent status of both men, who, at the same time, stressed their loyalty to the Seleucid dynasty.[50] Anu-uballit/Nikarchos rebuilt the temple for the sake of the lives of kings

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47 Boiy, 2005; Monerie, 2014: 78–80.

48 YOS 1 52; Falkenstein, 1941: 4–5; Doty, 1998: 95–96. The text was written on a clay cylinder, very likely excavated in the area of the temple complex.

49 WVDOG 51, pl. 108; Falkenstein, 1941: 6–7; Doty, 1998: 97. The inscription was found on several bricks of the main building of the temple.

50 In both inscriptions gods play no role in the sense that they are invoked or approved the building repairs. In the *Antiochus Cylinder*, too, the role of the gods was limited: Antiochus I himself initiated the rebuilding of the Ezida without divine intervention or asking for divine approval, as was the case in earlier Mesopotamian inscriptions. According to Stevens (2014: 77–79), this was a deliberate choice of Antiochus I and the Seleucid imperial administration. In the case of the Urukean inscriptions we could speculate that the omission of divine agency was the result of Greek influence and, more specifically, the concept of *euergetism*. But it cannot be excluded that both inscriptions and the *Antiochus Cylinder* bear witness of an internal evolution of Babylonian religion or of generic changes in composing building inscriptions.

Antiochus II (261–246) and Seleucus II (246–225);[51] Anu-uballit/Kephaon for the sake of the life of Antiochus III, his lord. Being members of the Ah'ûtu clan, both men may be considered mediators between the Seleucid administration and the Urukean temple community, Anu-uballit/Nikarchos in his function as city governor, Anu-uballit as a high priest. In their contacts with the royal administration they undoubtedly used their Greek name.

Anu-uballit/Nikarchos states that it was the king himself who granted him his second Greek name. The exact meaning of this act is difficult to understand. It is generally understood as a royal benefaction, possibly on the occasion of Anu-uballit's nomination as *šaknu*.[52] Perhaps the act of name-giving sanctioned the fact that the Babylonian, being a Seleucid governor, was granted access to the royal court.[53] In any case, it is clear that it was a great honour which Anu-uballit was proud to mention in his inscription.

This royal grant is unique thus far. As Anu-uballit/Nikarchos is the oldest attestation of a Babylonian having a Greek name, Monerie assumes that there was an evolution in the practice of taking a Greek name.[54] First, it was a royal privilege, later on Babylonians adopted Greek names themselves. It is always hazardous to base a hypothesis on just one attestation. Moreover, it is possible that native Babylonians had already borne Greek names in the time of Anu-uballit/Nikarchos or earlier, but exclusively used them in a Greek context, in Greek texts.

We do not know how Babylonians got their Greek names. Did they themselves choose them on a particular occasion in their lifetime, e.g. when they came into contact with the Seleucid administration? Or were they named at birth? Very likely both principles were at play.[55] To be sure,

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[51] It should be remarked that Antiochus had already died some two years before, in 246 BC. Could the dedication to this king mean that Anu-uballit started the construction works in his reign?

[52] Monerie, 2012: 331; 2014: 72, 81–83.

[53] For local elites and the royal court; see Strootman, 2013: 72–73. Or did Anu-uballit receive his Greek name as a reward for particular achievements at the king's service? The name *Nikarchos* could be translated as "leader of victory". One could speculate that the name was a deliberate choice of Antiochus by which the king wanted to honour the Babylonian's success in political or military events, like war or rebellion.

[54] Monerie, 2014: 86.

[55] For the various motives to choose this or that particular Greek personal name; see Monerie 2014: 75–78. In the case of Anu-uballit/Kephalon, one might speculate whether the Babylonian chose his Greek name deliberately. Etymologically the name can be

the mere fact that native Babylonians had a second Greek name does not imply that they adopted Greek culture too. Nor does it necessarily mean that the bearers knew Greek. People may have used a Greek name merely for practical or opportunistic reasons while not adopting other aspects of Greek culture. A Greek name could have facilitated contacts with the Seleucid administration and the Greek world in general. It could also serve as a tool for forging a career in the imperial administration or in other sectors, e.g. as merchants. But for some, a Greek name was an expression of their attraction to Greek culture and a willingness to participate in it. In sum, each individual may have had his own particular motives that led him to adopt a Greek name.

Apart from Babylonians having a double name, the cuneiform texts also document people identified solely by a Greek name. Their number increases from the end of the third and beginning of the second century BC. The bulk of cuneiform texts in which Greek names occur come from Uruk. The texts concerned are mostly contracts, only a few of which type have been preserved from Babylon. It cannot, therefore, serve to suggest that there were more bearers of Greek names in Uruk than in the latter city. The contracts reflect day-to-day practice.

When bearers of a Greek name have family members with a Babylonian name or are descendants of local clans, it is certain that they are native Babylonians or, in the cases of mixed marriages, had a partial Babylonian origin. In other instances, it can be argued that they were Greek officials in the service of the Crown. When such indicators are absent, it is difficult to determine the person's ethnic identity. Acting in a Babylonian context, mostly relating to temple affairs, it seems more likely that these bearers of Greek names were in fact native Babylonians. Some scholars assume that bearers of Greek names who had a Greek filiation were Greeks.[56] This is, however, far from certain, as we do not have any clue about their background, but the possibility that bearers of Greek names were indeed ethnic Greeks cannot be ruled out. If this is the case we must accept that Greeks and Babylonians lived together – some bearers of Greek names are mentioned in contracts as neighbours or witnesses – and had access to

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linked to κεφαλή ("head") and that is precisely the meaning of the Akkadian word *reš*, part of the name of the temple he restored, the Bit-Reš.

[56] Doty, 1977: 155; Oelsner, 1992: 342; Monerie, 2012: 340.

the native temples.[57] Corroborating evidence is absent, but it is conceivable that native Babylonians and Greeks may have had closer interrelations than one might think.

The reasons why native Babylonians only bore a Greek name in a purely Babylonian context are difficult to explain. It does not prove that such individuals were deeply imbued with Greek culture. We could see it as evidence of the wide diffusion of Greek culture and the great appeal it had on members of the temple community. It is possible that some of them only had a Greek name or bore it in daily life while having adopted a traditional Babylonian name in their cultic and scholarly activities.[58] In such cases we may speculate it was the parents who preferred to give their children a Greek name (instead of a Babylonian or Aramaic one). Their motives could be as various as those of Flemish parents in Belgium who gave their children French names at the time when French was the language of the political, economical and cultural elite. By giving a child a Greek name, these families expressed their desire and/or aspirations to be part of Greek culture. It also enabled them to distinguish themselves from other social classes. It could also be a statement of their 'Greekness'.

Of the four leading families in Hellenistic Uruk only the Ah'ûtu had adopted Greek names, at least in the surviving cuneiform sources. This is not surprising, as members of this family occupied high administrative positions in the temple and the city (e.g. Anu-uballit/Nikarchos and Kephalon) and thus had ties with the Seleucid administration. Members of the other clans had cultic functions within the temple itself.[59] It appears

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[57] We have the case of Kebros, son of Troilos. In a contract which was drawn up in Seleucia on the Tigris in 225/4 BC he dedicated three slaves to the Emeslam, the main temple of Cutha, see Oelsner, 1992; Monerie, 2014: 146 s.v. Kebros. As stated above, it must remain uncertain whether he was indeed an ethnic Greek. The fact that Kebros chose the medium of cuneiform writing to draw up a contract in a Hellenised city such as Seleucia may indicate that he was of Babylonian origin.

[58] In an augural request Anu-uballit/Kephalon is named by a third name: "who is called […]–pitu in the mouth of the people" (McEwan, 1981: 65–66, obv. 5–6). It suggests that this name, probably of Aramaic origin, was his usual name in daily life and that he used his traditional Babylonian name in the context of the temple.

[59] Members of the Sin-leqe-unninni were lamentation priests (*kalû*), whereas members of the Ekurzakir and Hunzû were exorcists (*ašipu*). It should be noted that in cultic, scholarly and scientific texts Greek names (as well as Aramaic) are completely absent. The scribes only used their 'classic' Babylonian names. This is no surprise, since their scribal activities formed the core of cuneiform culture in the Hellenistic period.

that members of the Ah'ûtu easily moved between their native and Greek cultures – or aimed to do so. It is plausible that they adopted Greek culture as a consequence of their close interaction with the Seleucid administration or were attracted to do so in order to strengthen their position in the power networks of the Seleucid Empire. As a Babylonian priestly family at the same time, their members really did have a 'double identity'.

The prime – and also best known – example of a Babylonian having a 'double identity' is undoubtedly Berossos, a priest of Belos, i.e. Bel-Marduk, the patron god of Babylon.[60] He composed a work on the history of Babylonia called *Babyloniaca*, which he dedicated to Antiochus I (281–261).[61] Berossos belonged to the temple community of the Esagil and, as an analysis of his work shows, was deeply rooted in cuneiform culture.[62] In order to compose his history he used a wide variety of cuneiform sources and native traditions. At the same time the Babylonian author aimed to reach out to a Greek-speaking audience. He wrote his *Babyloniaca* in Greek and shaped it into a truly Greek historical work – an ethnography or a local history, both labels are possible. Berossos was well versed in Greek literature, philosophy and culture.[63] He was a Babylonian scholar and a Greek historian at the same time. It is regrettable that we do not know how the Babylonian priest learnt Greek and became acquainted with Greek historiography and philosophical concepts.

The "Chaldean" Sudines, very likely the rendering of the Akkadian name Šumma-iddin, is another clear example of a native Babylonian having a double identity. He was a "seer" (*mantis*) of Attalus I of Pergamon in 240 BC.[64] He calculated lunar eclipses and wrote a work on the properties of stones. He is also listed as commentator on the astronomical poem *Phaenomena* of Aratus (ca. 310–240 BC), which means that he engaged with Greek astronomy/astrology.

Sudines left his native country in order to work at the court of a Hellenistic king. According to Vitruvius, Berossos too left Babylonia and

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[60] De Breucker, 2010; 2013. *Berossos* is the Greek rendering of the Akkadian name "Bel-re'û-šunu".

[61] Antiochus was co-regent of his father Seleucus from 295/4 to 281 and was entrusted with the Upper Satrapies, to which Babylonia belonged. Berossos could have composed his work during this co-regency as well as during his kingship.

[62] De Breucker, 2010; 2011: 640–647.

[63] De Breucker, 2010; 2011: 647–649; Haubold, 2013a; 2013b: 142–153.

[64] Schmidt, 2012.

opened a school on the island of Cos (BNJ 680 T 5a-b). The authenticity of this testimony is, however, debated.[65] There is other, indirect evidence of Babylonians migrating to the West. The transfer of highly sophisticated Babylonian astronomical knowledge to the Greek world, which increased dramatically from 150 BC onwards, can be explained, at least partly, by the migration of Babylonian astronomers to the West.[66] We may assume that these scientists, who left their native temple communities, were sufficiently acquainted with Greek to earn their living in a Greek-speaking milieu.

Let us return to Berossos and focus on his attitude towards Seleucid rule and Greek culture. Modern scholars assume that Berossos' aim was to support Seleucid rule and royal ideology with his *Babyloniaca* and wanted to instruct the dynasty how to become legitimate kings of Babylon.[67] The interpretation of an ancient literary and historical work, especially when it has been only fragmentarily preserved, is very hazardous and the risk that we impose our own views on the text is always present. Yet, such an interpretation is quite feasible.

On the occasion of Nebuchadnezzar II's accession to the throne, Berossos states that during the interregnum the Chaldean priests administered and secured the kingdom for the new king (BNJ 680 F 8a). The cuneiform sources are silent about this. It is tempting to speculate that Berossos himself invented it in order to demonstrate that the priestly class of Babylon was always loyal to the legitimate ruler and could be trusted with political power.

It is clear that Berossos gives a glorified picture of his culture in the *Babyloniaca*. His underlying aim was to prove the superiority of Babylonian culture as by far the oldest and thus most respectable. According to Berossos, Oannes, half fish, half human, introduced civilisation to mankind in Babylonia and "from that time nothing further has been discovered" (BNJ 680 F 1b). Oannes is the Greek rendering of Uan(na), the first of seven *apkallu*, in Babylonian tradition antediluvian sages clothed in a fish cloak. Oannes was, like Prometheus and Kekrops, a 'first inventor', a culture hero, but in the view of Berossos he surpassed all of them, Greek

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[65] Kuhrt, 1987: 43–44; De Breucker, 2010 ad T 5a–b; Haubold (2013: 143 n. 58) considers Berossos' sojourn in Cos as entirely plausible.

[66] For the process of transfer; see Jones, 1991: 442–445; 1993: 88–89.

[67] E.g. Kuhrt, 1987: 55–56; Dillery, 2007: 228.

as well as barbarian, in time.[68] Since Oannes invented everything before them, all culture heroes were in fact dependent on him. Berossos' emphasis on the antiquity of Babylonian civilisation could be explained as his reply to the dominant position Greek culture had in his time. And even the Greeks themselves conceded that their culture was much younger than that of Mesopotamia and Egypt.

In his native Babylonian milieu the popularity of Oannes and his fellow *apkallu* could also be seen in this light. In the Seleucid period the motif of the fish-*apkallu* on Babylonian seals was more popular than previously.[69] Their names were listed in the so-called 'Apkallu List', in which they are each linked to an antediluvian king.[70] The tablet that records this list was a copy made in 165 BC discovered in the Bit-Reš of Uruk; it is unknown how old the original is. The foundation of that very temple was ascribed to Oannes, as an inscription on several bricks of the building tells us: "The Bit-Reš, which Uan-adapa built in earlier times".[71] This is clearly a pious forgery, as the temple was first built in the late period – but a significant one.

By means of the *apkallu* and the first of them, Oannes/Uanna, both Berossos and his peers of the temple communities fostered the image of their native culture as very ancient and the origin of all wisdom. Berossos, for his part, addressed the outside world, whereas his peers, the scribes of the cuneiform texts, were expressing these views within the inner circle of their temple community.

It has been observed that for the late period, i.e. for the Achaemenid and Hellenistic times, there was apparently an increased interest in history among the Babylonian temple communities.[72] It is probably part of an attempt to redefine their group's identity in a changed political and cultural setting. The native king was no longer the ruler of the

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[68] Oannes became well-known in Greek and Roman learned circles. Hyginus states that Oannes explained astronomy (*Fab*. 274). The Emperor Julian the Apostate calls him a sage among the Assyrians and Babylonians (Gal. 37). According to Helladius (4th c. AD), Oes (Ὤης) invented and taught astronomy and writing (*apud* Photius, *Bibliotheca*, cod. 279, 535a); see also Hippolytus. *Haer*. 5.7.6.

[69] Wallenfels, 1993.

[70] Van Dijk, 1962: 44–52; Lenzi, 2008.

[71] WVDOG 51, pl. 108, 6–7; see Van Dijk, 1962: 47; Falkenstein, 1941: 6; Doty, 1998: 97. Two bricks omit the epithet "adapa".

[72] Grayson, 1980: 192–193.

universe. And native culture had to compete with the culture of the new ruling elite, which exercised a powerful attraction. It is, therefore, not perhaps a coincidence that several compositions from the late period – chronicles, historical narratives ('epics') and fictitious royal letters – have been preserved about Babylonian kings who liberated their nation from foreign domination: Kurigalzu II (1332–1308), Adad-šuma-usur (1216–1187), Nebuchadnezzar I (1125–1104) and Nabopolassar (626–605).[73] All tablets originate from Babylon, more specifically from the Esagil and its surrounding quarters, where the members of the temple community dwelt. One of these compositions – a fictitious letter of the Assyrian king Sin-šarra-iškun to Nabopolassar, "his lord" – can be dated to the Seleucid period, as the colophon of the tablet states that it was copied from an original kept in the Esagil probably during the reign of Alexander Balas (152–145).[74] For the other tablets it is not certain whether they date back to the Achaemenid or Hellenistic period. Some of the compositions concerning Nebuchadnezzar I (but not all) are copies of originals dating back to the Neo–Assyrian period – and perhaps earlier. In the other cases, it is unclear whether the tablets are copies of older texts or newly created compositions. If the latter is the case, it bears witness to an effort to create a glorious past. But even if these tablets are copies, this implies that their contents were important for the scribes to copy and preserve.

Other compositions from Babylon and one from Uruk aim to demonstrate that the fate of the ruler was completely dependent on his reverence for the city's patron god, Bel-Marduk in the case of Babylon, Anu in that of Uruk.[75] A pious king who honours the god, his temple and city will prosper. A ruler who sins will face misfortunes by way of punishment. If he repents, good fortune will return. This topic was not new and goes back

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[73] For an overview; see De Breucker, 2015: 77–82. The historical narratives, which were published by Grayson, 1975, have been very fragmentarily preserved, which makes their interpretation very difficult. Kurigalzu II fought against Assyria and Elam. Adad-šuma-usur repulsed the Assyrian domination and dethroned the Assyrian puppet king in Babylonia. After the Elamites had raided Babylonia and abducted the statue of Marduk Nebuchadnezzar I campaigned against Elam, defeated it and returned the god's statue to Babylon. Nabopolassar liberated Babylonia from Assyrian yoke and overthrew the Assyrian empire – the latter in reality in a coalition with the Medes, but both Berossos (BNJ 680 F 7c–d and 685 F 5a) and the two fictitious letters regarding Nabopolassar omit their role, undoubtedly in order to give Nabopolassar all credits.

[74] CTMMA 2 144.

[75] See De Breucker, 2015: 83–85.

to times when Babylonia was an independent nation. It had, however, real meaning for the temple community in the Hellenistic period too: for its members the king, albeit foreign, remained dependent on the goodwill of the Babylonian gods. Hence, the Seleucid kings had to pay obeisance and honour the god, his temple and city for their own sake. Members of the temple community, the priests, acted as mediators between the god and the king and in this way created a *raison d'être* for themselves.

Since the tablets dealing with the creation of a glorious past and the kings' submission to the gods were written in cuneiform, they only circulated in the milieu of the temple community and were not meant for the outside world. The compositions supported the efforts of the scribes to uphold the age-old native culture and its long history. As Van der Spek noted, language, religion and common history are often boundary markers creating a group's ethnicity and identity.[76] Upholding the cuneiform culture, practising traditional Babylonian religion and creating a common glorious past are the tools with which the Babylonian temple communities aimed to (re)define their identity or ethnicity in a globalised Greek world, in which their members participated at various levels.

To conclude, through interaction between the Babylonian temple communities and the Seleucid administration, which were in Greek, the former came into close contact with Greek culture. As a consequence, native Babylonians passed beyond the boundaries of their own culture and moved between Babylonian and Greek culture. Like in Ptolemaic Egypt, they adopted a 'double identity', as the practice of using Greek names demonstrates. Adopting a Greek name, however, does not say much about the degree to which Greek culture was adopted. A Greek name could have been borne for purely opportunistic reasons, but it could also intimate that the bearer was part of Greek culture – or wished to be so.

If someone's sole name in a cuneiform text is Greek and the individual's background is not known, it is hardly possible to determine his/her ethnic origin. If it was Greek, it shows that Greeks and Babylonians had close contacts and lived together. If we assume a Babylonian origin, it can be seen as evidence of the wide diffusion of Greek culture and its appeal on the local temple elite.

Berossos and the astronomer Sudines had a 'double identity'. Being Babylonian scholars, they engaged with Greek culture. In his *Babyloniaca*

[76] Van der Spek, 2009: 102.

Berossos emphasises the antiquity of his native culture (in contrast to the dominant, but younger Greek culture). According to him, Oannes, the first of seven antediluvian sages, the *apkallu*, brought culture to mankind, making Babylonia the cradle of human civilisation. These *apkallu* were a popular theme among the members of the Babylonian temple communities. It shows that they shared Berossos' ideas, not surprisingly because the latter belonged to that milieu. But Berossos also addressed another audience, the Greek-speaking world, whereas the cuneiform scribes acted in the inner circle of the temple community.

In that milieu cuneiform texts treating Babylonia's glorious past or advocating the king's duty to honour the city's patron god were composed and/or copied and transmitted. It was part of a process of self-definition in a new political and cultural setting. The temple community attempted to redefine its identity in a globalised world, in which, to be sure, they participated at the same time.

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Communication in Alexander's Empire

Christopher Baron

Between late April and mid-July in the year 330 BCE, Alexander along with a small portion of his army covered nearly 1500 km in pursuit of the defeated Persian king Darius III.[1] The journey began in Persepolis, with the full Macedonian army marching north toward Ecbatana. But as news reached Alexander of developments in Darius' position, he quickened his pace, shedding parts of his army that would slow him down. By the time he overtook the remnants of the Persian forces somewhere in Parthia and discovered that Darius had been murdered, Alexander was accompanied by just 500 mounted soldiers.

Alexander has often received praise not just for his genius as a military commander, but more specifically for his ability to solve the daunting logistical problems of supply and communication which confronted the conqueror of the Persian Empire.[2] The details of his solutions, however, are difficult to pin down. It is not quite the case that our extant literary sources ignore the problem – almost every page of Arrian's account, at least, contains references to messengers arriving or leaving, instructions being sent, or news traveling. But those superficial notices are almost always the extent of it. Despite their interest in warfare, in-depth and comprehensive analysis of military operations does not constitute a regular feature of the narratives written by the Greek historians. This is true even for a military man such as Arrian was.

At the same time, the extant accounts of Alexander's campaign provide a wealth of material that allows a glimpse into the workings of the communications of an invading army. Some brief treatments of the topic

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1 For the distances, see Brunt, 1976–1983: 493–494.

2 Borza, 1972: 238–239, highlighting the evidence for the possibility of communication within Alexander's empire in even the most difficult conditions; Engels, 1978: 119–122.

exist, but they normally remain at a very general level.[3] I would like to ask more probing questions of our evidence: who were these people who traveled through war-time Persia carrying information? How did Alexander and his staff know what lay ahead of them, and how did they evaluate the trustworthiness of the information they received? To what extent did Alexander rely on an existing system of communications, and what changes did he make? This essay represents the first step in a much larger project of integrating the data from Alexander's campaign into a broader picture – including prior Persian procedures and later Hellenistic developments – that encompasses the administrative, geographic, logistical, and social elements which allowed information to travel throughout this vast region. In this initial foray, I consider the documentary evidence from Achaemenid Persia alongside the texts of the Alexander historians in order to add a social component, and even an individual one where possible, to our picture of communication in Alexander's empire.

The Persepolis Fortification Tablets (PFT) provide evidence for the nature of communications in the Persian Empire in the early fifth century. Most notably, Category Q concerns "the distribution of food rations to persons and groups traveling from place to place within the Empire".[4] The mere existence of these records indicates the seriousness with which the Persian imperial administration took the maintenance of a system to ensure official travel on their roads, and the tablets reveal, as Pierre Briant concludes, the "unified imperial system" created at least under the rule of Darius I, if not earlier.[5] The Persepolis documents attest to the following specific features of the Persian road network:

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[3] Tarn, 1948: 2.171–180 ("Appendix 3: Communications", not as promising as it sounds for the sort of details I am interested in here); Robinson, 1963: 57–59 (catalogue of references to communications in the Alexander historians); Borza, 1972 (by far the most interested in the details); Engels, 1980; Badian, 2012: 355–358; from the Achaemenid Persian angle, Briant, 2002: 357–377 and, briefly, Waters, 2014: 111–113. Naiden / Talbert 2017 is an exciting new attempt to engage broadly the topic of ancient communications, which "has been so persistently neglected" (xviii).

[4] Briant, 2002: 422. For the PFT see Hallock, 1969. See Kuhrt, 2007: 2.730–762 for translation and commentary on the evidence for Persian roads and communications.

[5] Briant, 2002: 448; cf. Waters, 2014: 111. Colburn, 2013 states the case for "a high level of connectivity" in the Empire. Kuhrt, 2007: 2.710 = Babylonian tablet BM 79746 [Sippar], dated 2 January 530 BCE, concerns measurement of the Royal Road. See also Lazenby, 1993: 30 for comments on what was required to achieve the levels of military mobility Herodotus records for Cyrus, Darius, and Xerxes.

- warehouses and distribution centers (*irmatam*) as well as the officials responsible for them;
- the "express service" (*pirradaziš*) relying on individual or small groups of riders;
- "elite guides" (*barrišdama*) who were responsible for conducting groups of foreigners on journeys through the empire;
- sealed documents which provided the necessary royal authorization to use the roads.

Finally, it should be noted that, although the Elamite language predominates, the Persepolis Fortification Tablets also contain a number of other languages, as well as references to supplementary oral information. Thus, as Matthew Stolper and Jan Tavernier conclude, the tablets reveal "interplay among several streams of information".[6]

The Greek literary evidence supports this view. We have Herodotus' famous description of the Royal Road from Sardis to Susa, plus Xenophon's comments on the road in his *Cyropaideia*.[7] Elsewhere, Herodotus recounts (3.67) how the false Smerdis, in order to consolidate his rule, sent couriers to every tribe of the Empire announcing no taxes for three years. This is the sort of thing we might discount as invention or hyperbole, except that we know that such mass communication (if not the tax exemption!) was feasible not just in Herodotus' time, but probably in the late sixth century as well. Herodotus and Xenophon also provide evidence for satrapal archives and their scribes.[8] Plutarch does the same for a later fourth-century context, stating that letters from the Persian king to his satraps in Asia Minor regarding money for Demosthenes were found by Alexander when he captured Sardis (*Demos*. 20). Plutarch also recounts how Alexander, after an ill-conceived plan to catch Eumenes in a lie ended up destroying the secretary's documents, requested all his satraps (and generals) to send him copies of the papers that had been lost (*Eum*. 2). The material evidence dating to the 330s–310s – sealings from Dascyleion

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6 Stolper / Tavernier, 2007: 23.

7 Hdt. 5.52; Xen. *Cyr*. 8.6.17–18. See Borza, 1972: 240 n. 41, for time estimates from Sardis to Susa – some have suggested six to nine days, but Borza thinks a month would not be far off in 331/0 (cf. Starr, 1975: 69–70). Borza also notes that "it would be surprising if Alexander, who usually made careful administrative arrangements wherever he went, neglected this vital communications link".

8 Hdt. 3.128; Xen. *Anab*. 1.2.20.

in northwest Asia Minor, and Aramaic documents from Bactria and from Idumaea (southern Palestine) – corroborates this picture. As Matt Waters has recently concluded, each province, even the "far-flung" ones, had a bureaucracy resembling that found in Persepolis.[9] Communication between these centers required maintaining a road network on a vast scale; but here too all the evidence points to an official, imperial organization responsible for planning, building, and repairing the roads.[10]

Thus, when Alexander approached Ecbatana in the spring of 330, we should consider not only the actions and movements of Darius III and his entourage, his officers, his high-ranking noblemen, and his soldiers, but also the reaction of the satrapal bureaucracy at the Median capital. Mid-level administrators, scribes, engineers, skilled construction workers, road crews – when Darius and the Persian army fled to the east, what did *these* men do? I presume they would not have been expected to join the King in flight, or even welcome to do so: most of their skills would not have been all that useful on the road for an army in flight, and they would have created extra mouths to feed.[11]

Furthermore, when we consider the immediate aftermath of Alexander's conquest, these satrapal bureaucrats take on even greater importance. Alexander had only so many Macedonians and Greeks to leave behind him; nor did these men have any experience in managing affairs on such a large scale. Most likely, he depended on the continued presence of some part of the satrapal staff. Especially as Alexander and the Macedonian army ventured further east, the support and knowledge offered by the previous Persian bureaucracy must have been crucial to his ability to make decisions and logistical arrangements.[12]

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[9] Waters, 2014: 103, with bibliography on Dascyleion; Naveh / Shaked, 2012, for Bactria; Eph'al / Naveh, 1996, for Idumaea.

[10] Kuhrt, 2007: 2.730–733; Waters, 2014: 112; cf. Briant, 2002: 361.

[11] Thus I find it unlikely that Ecbatana was "an empty shell" after Darius evacuated (Bosworth, 1976: 134), even if the King took the treasury with him. Cf. n. 19 below.

[12] Müller, 2014: 240–242 emphasizes Alexander's adoption of Persian administrative structures. Olbrycht, 2010: 353 points out that between 331 and 329, Alexander relied almost solely on Iranians to serve as satraps (from Babylon to Bactria). Evidence from the other direction for continuity is found in Aramaic documents: one from Bactria records orders for provisions in "the seventh year of the reign of Alexander" (Naveh / Shaked, 2012: C4), and four ostraca from Idumaea refer to regnal years of Philip (III, Arrhidaeus) and Alexander (IV): Eph'al / Naveh, 1996: 54, 58 (nos. 96–97, 111–112).

Two groups of personnel in particular are interesting in this context. First are the *barrišdama*, "elite guides". The Persepolis tablets mention them escorting individuals or groups from each edge of the empire: Indians, Cappadocians, men of Sardis, Scythians, and Egyptians.[13] Similarly, the members of the express service (*pirradaziš*) traveled, alone or in very small groups, at high speed across the empire. After Darius' flight from Ecbatana – if not after his defeat at Gaugamela in October 331 – such men as these would have looked to the new ruler for employment and protection; moreover, their particular set of skills would have been invaluable to the Macedonian invader. The *barrišdama* especially were, presumably, polyglot; both groups were more familiar with the byways of the empire than anyone. They could have provided Alexander and his staff with detailed information which it would have taken days or weeks for his own scouts to obtain.

Consider Arrian's account of Alexander's pursuit of Darius up to and through the Caspian Gates (*Anab*. 3.20.4–21.2). Upon passing inside the Gates and reaching the limits of inhabited land, Alexander was hearing (ἤκουε, imperfect verb) that the region beyond was desert, so he sent Coenus out with a small foraging party to gather supplies. But in the meantime, Bagistanes and Antibelus (Babylonian noblemen) arrived at Alexander's camp, having deserted from the Persian forces; they reported the arrest of the King by Bessus and other satraps and high-ranking officials. At this news, Alexander took up the chase with a small part of his army, without even waiting for Coenus and the foraging party to return. According to Arrian, Alexander and his men took only two days' worth of rations, while Craterus was left in command of the main army force and instructed to follow at a normal pace.

Bagistanes could have provided Alexander intelligence concerning the route and what he could expect to find in the Persian camp. But Alexander's initial decision to gather supplies (before Bagistanes arrived) must have been a result of information from the Persians who had already joined him and knew the roads and territory east of the Caspian Gates – and who had perhaps been gaining Alexander's trust ever since he left Ecbatana twelve days earlier. Consider too Alexander's decision to immediately pursue Bessus. It is hard to imagine that even Alexander would have led his best soldiers out into the desert without the input of those who knew the land;

[13] Kuhrt, 2007: 2.733–735; Hallock, 1969: 42; see also Kim, 2013: 41 n. 71.

nor would it have been wise for him to place full faith in the just-arrived Bagistanes. In other words, the decision to carry just two days' rations was informed by a combination of relatively trustworthy local knowledge, news from a high-ranking eye-witness, and strategic necessities (or desires) on Alexander's part.

One final group of people to consider in the communications process is that of relocated workers or populations. Category Q of the Persepolis Fortification Tablets preserves frequent records of such relocations of workers in the early fifth century, sometimes very large groups (for example, 1500 workers relocated from Persepolis to Susa: PFT 1542). Briant has drawn attention to the treatment of workers referred to as *kurtaš*; they were considered "an undifferentiated labor force" by Persian administration, which resulted in families being broken up and separated. These deportations continued into the second half of the fourth century.[14] One individual in such a situation may be recorded in our literary sources: the bi- or perhaps even trilingual Lycian shepherd who guides Alexander around the Persian Gates between Susa and Persepolis (Plut. *Alex*. 37.1; Curt. 5.4.4; Diod. Sic. 17.68.5).[15] Other examples of relocated peoples can be found in Diodorus' narrative of the campaign.

Could this aspect of Persian policy have ultimately exacerbated the breakdown of authority in the face of Alexander's invasion? That is, when the Persian army and King were defeated and pushed into the east, there would have been groups and individuals in all parts of the empire without roots, without pressing reasons to stay where they were, and with good reasons to want to return to their previous or original location. This would have made for dangerous travel – these were not people who would have been protected on the roads, nor could they have been guaranteed a welcome reception by the Macedonian army. But they are a potential group of information carriers, in addition to the deserters from the Persian cause, like Bagistanes, found in the pages of Arrian and Curtius.

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[14] Briant, 2002: 430–439.

[15] Even if we do not accept the historicity of this Lycian shepherd, his invention requires some level of plausibility to be acceptable to the contemporary audience (and his presence in the three authors would indicate an appearance in one or more of the lost early Alexander historians). See Zahrnt 1999 for an analysis, though much of it rests on the assumption that Cleitarchus must be a less reliable source than others. Arrian (3.18.4) attributes the information about the alternate path to Alexander's prisoners-of-war.

I will conclude by looking at a particular incident in Alexander's campaign which highlights some of the questions that the extant accounts raise about communications as well as some of the answers they can provide. This is Alexander's pursuit of Darius in 330. To illustrate the details our sources provide, but which do not always stand out in their narrative, I quote Arrian here at length, with the moments of information being received (or sent, in the final instance) italicized.[16]

> "[From Persepolis,] Alexander now headed for Media, as *he kept hearing reports* that Darius was there. Darius had decided that if Alexander remained at Susa and Babylon, he would himself remain in Media, in case there was any sedition among Alexander's forces; but if Alexander should march against him, he would go farther into the interior […] [2] He sent the women, his remaining furniture, and the covered carriages to the place known as the Caspian Gates; he himself remained in Ecbatana with the forces he had chosen from those at hand. *On hearing this*, Alexander advanced toward Media. […] [3] *When it was reported to him en route* that Darius had decided to meet him in battle and again try the chances of war, and that he had been joined by his Scythian and Kadousian allies, Alexander gave orders for the pack animals and their keepers, along with the other gear, to follow behind, while he led the rest of the army forward, armed for battle. In twelve days he reached Media. [4] There *he learned* that Darius lacked sufficient forces to do battle, that his Kadousian and Scythian allies had not come, and that Darius was intending to flee. Alexander now increased his pace. When he was roughly a three-day journey from Ecbatana, he was met by Bisthanes son of Ochus (Ochus had been king of the Persians before Darius); [5] *Bisthanes reported* that Darius had fled four days earlier with the treasure from Media, about seven thousand talents, and an army of nearly three thousand cavalry and six thousand infantry. […] [8] Kleitos, the commander of the royal squadron, *was instructed*, when he reached Ecbatana from Susa, where he had been left ill, to take command of the Macedonians Alexander was now leaving behind to guard the treasure and to proceed on the road to Parthia, where Alexander himself was also about to go."

In just this initial stage of the action, the march from Persepolis to Ecbatana, Arrian's text reveals four separate instances of communications received by Alexander: at Persepolis, en route, upon entering Media, and

[16] Arr. *Anab*. 3.19, trans. Pamela Mensch.

three days from Ecbatana.[17] All this takes place over the course of perhaps five or six weeks.[18] The sources of these bits of information may have been scouts, sent out and now returning, or deserters from the Persian cause.

While still in Persepolis, Alexander learns that Darius is in Ecbatana; as with the passage discussed earlier, Arrian's imperfect verb (ἐπυνθάνετο here) may indicate multiple reports. Arrian goes on to give details about Darius' intentions, including the statement that Darius held out hope for sedition in Alexander's camp. Even if Arrian is simply imputing motives to Darius (which is perfectly possible), such a scenario seems to assume communication – in the form of spies, military intelligence – between Ecbatana and Persepolis during some part of the four months of Alexander's stay in the latter place. Arrian rounds off his brief focus on Darius with a restatement of the fact that Alexander, "hearing these things, set out for Media".

In the rest of the passage, we should take note of the different levels of detail and trustworthiness, or at least the dilemma Alexander faced. At some point after leaving Persepolis, he is told on the road that Darius has decided to fight and is gathering allies. Thus, Alexander must march with an army in good order and prepared to fight. Eleven days later he reaches Media, where he learns that Darius does *not* have an army which is ready to do battle, those allies did not show up, and the King has decided to flee. So, Alexander increases his pace, leaving part of his forces behind; but when he is three days away from Ecbatana, he is met by Bisthanes, a son of the previous Persian king Ochus, who reports that four days earlier Darius had fled. The long gap (eleven days) between reports is interesting – did Alexander receive no news during that period? – as is the fact that the deserter, Bisthanes, was not moving very fast: he, presumably with a small entourage, meets Alexander at a point three days' *army* march from the city, with a report of events four days earlier. The appearance of

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[17] Curtius gives none of these details for this leg of the campaign, but he does add that in Media Alexander was met by reinforcements coming from Cilicia, at which point he decided to pursue Darius into the east (5.17.12).

[18] Arrian does not specify the length of time for two stages of the march (from Persepolis to receiving the first report about Darius, and from the border of Media to the arrival of Bisthanes). The distance from Persepolis to Ecbatana was about 700 km; Brunt, 1976–1983: 493, describes it as a "hard march" and calculates 38–43 days (including the time necessary for Alexander to subdue Paraetacene, 3.19.2, omitted from the quotation of Arrian above). Cf. Milns, 1966; see Engels, 1978: 153–156 for Alexander's travel times (though he does not include this portion of the campaign in his table).

Bisthanes is also intriguing in light of the questions I raised earlier about the satrapal bureaucracy: had he been left behind by the King in order to manage affairs in Ecbatana and to attempt to make Alexander's arrival as painless as possible for the inhabitants? Given that the Macedonians had just burned Persepolis to the ground, the Persian court likely would have been concerned about the fate of this crucial satrapal administrative center.

Arrian has Alexander enter Ecbatana and pause to make various arrangements. Curtius, on the other hand, has him bypass the city completely when he hears of Darius' flight and decide to pursue the King directly. Here are selections from Curtius' account of the final stages of Alexander's chase; it is interesting that the historian traditionally viewed as more "rhetorical" than the sober-minded, military-oriented Arrian includes just as many, if not more, clues for information traveling (italicized again).[19]

> 5.13.1–3: "*On hearing* that Darius had moved from Ecbatana, Alexander left the road leading into Media and proceeded in vigorous pursuit of the fleeing king. He arrived at Tabae, a town in the remotest part of Paraetacene, to be *informed by deserters* that Darius was making for Bactria in headlong flight. Subsequently *he received more reliable intelligence from the Babylonian Bagistanes,* who claimed that, while Darius was not actually a prisoner, he was in danger of being murdered or put in irons."
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> 5.13.6–7: "After advancing 500 stades, they reached the village where Bessus had seized Darius. There *Melon, Darius' interpreter*, was captured. Poor health had made him unable to keep pace with the Persian force and, when he was overtaken by the swiftly moving Alexander, he posed as a deserter. *From him Alexander learned the facts*."
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> 5.13.9: "While Alexander was thus engaged [with troop rearrangements], he was approached by *Orsilus and Mithracenes who had deserted* out of disgust at Bessus' treachery. *They reported* that the Persians were 500 stades away but that they would reveal a shortcut to Alexander."
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> 5.13.11: "After advancing 300 stades they were met by *Mazaeus' son Brochubelus, a former satrap of Syria*. He had also *deserted*, and now *brought the news* that Bessus was no more than 200 stades distant […]"

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[19] Trans. J. C. Yardley. Bosworth, 1976: 132–136, judges Curtius to be more accurate here. *Contra* Badian, 1985: 447 n. 2, finding it unlikely that Alexander bypassed a city of Ecbatana's importance.

In Curtius' account, Alexander, after learning that Darius has fled Ecbatana, receives his next bit of news at a village, Tabae, deep in Paraetacene: deserters report Darius in full flight, but Curtius implies that Alexander waited for "more reliable intelligence", which comes from the high-ranking Babylonian deserter, Bagistanes (whom we have already seen in Arrian). The next informant is Melon, formerly the Greek interpreter for the Great King; while he does not appear in Arrian's account by name, he may be the unattributed source of the report of Bessus' coup there (3.21.4–5).[20] Then, according to Curtius, three more high-ranking deserters keep Alexander up-to-date on developments in the Persian camp; furthermore, two of them offer to indicate a shortcut through the desert. Again, Arrian differs in these details: he has the inhabitants of a remote village provide this knowledge (3.21.6–7). It is difficult to know what to make of these discrepancies, given the many questions surrounding the source tradition. But the two reports together would seem to indicate that many details of information flow were recorded by the earliest Alexander historians.

In the sequence of events Curtius offers, we have to assume the presence of interpreters – and on both sides: in the entourages of these Persian or Babylonian noblemen, as well as on Alexander's staff.[21] Presumably Alexander had more men like Laomedon, the Mytilenean-born Companion mentioned by Arrian for being bilingual (3.6.6). Margaret Miller has implied that a "polyglot officer" was still unusual in the fourth century.[22] Perhaps that is true at that high-ranking level, but if the narratives our sources provide have any basis in reality, it seems that we must assume the existence of more interpreters farther down the social scale (such as Melon).

Many such men as I have discussed here – *barrišdama*, *pirradaziš*, interpreters – were not likely to find their names recorded by Greek historians of Alexander and his successors. This results from the combination of the elite bias of Greek authors and their unwillingness to dive down into the details of military and diplomatic actions. But I hope to have shown that adding the evidence from Persia to close readings of the Greek texts may help illuminate the role of such individuals in the flow of information during Alexander's campaign, as well as the impact of war on a broader swath of ancient society.

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[20] Unfortunately, nothing more is known of this Melon, and he is the only interpreter listed in Hofstetter, 1978 (p. 125, no. 214).

[21] Mairs, 2011 has examined the conversation Curtius recounts (5.11) between the interpreter Patron and Darius.

[22] Miller, 1997: 132 n. 139.

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Mithridates VI and the Formation of an Empire

Hilmar Klinkott

Mithridates VI, the famous king of Pontus, is known as the last great foreign enemy of the Roman Republic, threatening not only the Roman policy in the East but also the Roman Empire itself. But is his dominion justifiably to be designated as 'empire'? And what size and shape had this empire? Pompeius Trogus, who lived under the reign of Augustus, describes Mithridates VI as someone, who had the ambition to turn his inherited kingdom into an 'empire'.

> Pomp. Trog./Iust. 37, 3, 1: "Ad regni deinde administrationem cum accessisset, statim non de regendo, sed de augendo regno cogitavit."
>
> "When he (Mithridates) took over the government of his kingdom, he immediately thought about not how to rule, but how to enlarge the kingdom."

The history of the Pontic kingdom, already long before Mithridates VI, offers a lot of programmatic examples for its attempts to expand as well as for Roman interventions. The first and most important example certainly is the reign of Pharnaces I of Pontos, who successfully occupied Sinope, the main harbour for maritime connections to the Black Sea area as far as the city Odessus, in 183 BC.[1] During the following year – 183/2 BC – Pharnakes invaded Cappadocia[2], an operation resulting in a war between Pharnaces and his allies, the dynast Artaxias and Acusilochus in Asia Minor as well as the Sauromatian Galatus on the Crimea, and the alliance

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[1] Strab. 12,3,11 (C 546); Rostovtzeff, 1955: 453. The contact between Pharnakes and Odessus is documented by IG Bulg. 1^2 40; see also McGing, 1986: 32. For maritime connections and international relations in general see Mehl, 1987: 154–162. In this very moment the Romans refrained an intervention although a Rhodian embassy entreated to. See Pol. 23,9,2f.; Liv. 40,2,6; Wiemer, 2002: 294.

[2] For the invasion see Pol. Frg. 112; 23,9. 1-4; 24,1,1; Walbank, 1979: 253; McGing, 1986: 25; Diehl, 1938; 1849.

of Ariarathes of Cappadocia, Eumenes II of Pontus, Prusias I of Bithynia, the Crimean *polis* Chersonnesus and several recently occupied Pontic cities like Heracleia, Cyzicus and Mesembria. Finally, when Pharnaces was defeated in this war on multiple fronts by the superior force of his enemies, he had to sign a peace treaty which guaranteed the sovereignty of Chersonnesus.[3] The text of this treaty of 179 BC, preserved in the epigraphic record, clearly proofs the existence of Roman *amicitia* with the *polis* of Chersonnesus, and Roman self-interest regarding Pontic expansion on the Crimea.[4] Nevertheless, Pharnaces predetermined the political goals, which Mithridates VI would also pursue.[5]

It was only Mithridates IV who succeeded in freeing Pontus from its political isolation in Asia Minor and in turning onetime liabilities towards Rome into friendship.[6] His successor, Mithridates V, is as well proven as reliable *amicus et socius populi Romani*:[7] In 149 BC, during the 3rd Punic war, he contributed ships and auxiliary troops to support Rome.[8] Likewise he supported Manlius Aquilius in the war against Aristonicus and was even personally engaged in the fighting.[9] Apart from that he enlarged his influence across Galatia and succeeded in being appointed as heir of the Paphlagonian king by will.[10] The Roman senate announced thereafter that Phrygia should be given as reward for military assistance to Mithridates V, who received a contract accordingly. Therefore the Pontic king had not only contributed money but put forward his former claims for the donation of Seleucus II Callinicus.[11] Finally, when an insurgency arose in Cappadocia, Mithridates V tried to occupy this kingdom as well and married his

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3 To the peace treaty: Pol. 25,2. To the treaty between Pharnakes and Chersonnesus: IOSPE 1^2 402; extensively Diehl, 1938: 1849f.

4 IOSPE 1^2, 402,l,3 and 26: τήν τε πρὸς Ῥωμαίους φιλίαν.

5 Pomp. Trog./Iust. 38, 6 seems to indicate that Mithridates VI. had the development under Pharnaces in mind.

6 McGing, 1986: 35.

7 According to AMithr. 10 he became first of his dynasty "friend of the Romans".

8 AMithr. 10.

9 Eutrop. IV 20,1; Oros. 5,10,2; Hansen. 197: 156f.

10 Iustin. 37,4,5; 38,7,10; Meyer, 1879: 82.

11 See Mitchell, 1993: 29; Magie, 1950: 154f. Therefore I prefer reading 'Phrygia Maior' in Pomp. Trog./Iust. 37,1,2. Last but not least it is evident by Pomp. Trog./Iust. 38,5, that Mithridates V got Great Phrygia by Rome. Concerning his claims by Seleucus Callinicus see Pomp. Trog./Iust. 38,5.

daughter Laodice to the Cappadocian king, Ariarathes Epiphanes.[12] But in 121 BC the *tribunus plebis* C. Gracchus prohibited the legal incorporation of Phrygia to the Pontic kingdom, and the senate approved his decision.[13] C. Gracchus officially explained in the *concilium plebis* how Mithridates V and Nicomedes II. of Bithynia had tried to manipulate the senate's decision by bribery.[14] The redemption of Phrygia took place immediately after the death of Mithridates V, thus before his immature son was established as his successor.[15] The senate's decision was obviously an affront towards the Pontic crown and in particular towards the young Mithridates VI. One cannot help the impression, that the political standing of the 11 year old Mithridates VI was rather weak in 121 BC.[16]

Five years later the tide started to turn: In 115/114 BC an embassy of the Tauric Chersonesus arrived in Sinope. Since 179 BC the circumstances of their *polis* had changed radically. Now Scythian, Sauromatian and Roxolanian tribes threatened the Bosporanian *poleis* on the Crimea.[17] This is why the *polis* of Chersonesus, unable to further fight back the Scythian attacks and to comply with their obligations for tribute any longer,[18] asked the young and ambitious[19] king of Pontus for help. Strabo 7,4,3 (C 309) explains:

> "This city was at first self-governing (αὐτόνομος), but when it was sacked by the barbarians it was forced to choose Mithridates Eupator as protector (προστάτην). He was then leading an army against the barbarians who lived beyond the isthmus as far as the Borysthenes and the Adrias. (…) At the same time, also, he not only subdued all these (Scythians) by force, but also established himself as lord of the Bosporus, receiving the country as a voluntary gift from Parisades who held sway over it. So from that

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[12] AMithr. 10; Iust. 38,1,1; Geyer, 1932b: 2162f. To the genealogical claims of the Mithridatids to Cappadocia see recently Lerouge-Cohen, 2017: 223–233.

[13] AMithr. 11; Iustin. 38,5,3; Geyer, 1932b: 2162; Meyer, 1879: 82. To the law of C. Gracchus concerning the taxes of Asia see Stockton, 1979: 153–156.

[14] Gell. XI 10, 1–7; Münzer, 1923: 1389.

[15] See Pomp. Trog./Iust. 38,5. Later Mithridates VI. complained the Romans would have snatched Greater Phrygia from his possessions during his immaturity: AMithr. 13,57.

[16] According to Strabo 10,4,10 Mithridates VI was 11 years old when his father has been murdered in Sinope 121 BC. See also AMithr. 112; Meyer, 1879: 83f.

[17] Concerning the pressure of the "neighbouring barbarians" just in the time of Pharnakes I. see IOSPE I^2 343; 401; McGing, 1986: 46–50; Rostovzeff, 1951: 227–229.

[18] In detail see McGing, 1986: 47–50.

[19] See Pomp.Trog./Iust. 37,3,1.

time on down to the present the city of the Chersonesites has been subject to the potentates of the Bosporus (τοῖς τοῦ Βοσπόρου δυνάσταις ἡ τῶν Χερρονησιτῶν πόλις ὑπήκοος μέχρι νῦν ἐστι).”

Extending the Rule: the Bosporan Wars

Mithridates VI answered the Bosporanian request for help and sent troops, lead by his *strategos* Diophantus, to Crimea in 114 BC in order to force back the nomadic tribes. The famous inscription IOSPE I2 352 (= SEG XXX 963) from Chersonesus informs us about three successful campaigns of Diophantus.[20] During the first one Diophantus reconquered the Crimea from the Scythians, led by their king Palacus.[21] At least a year later he fought once more against Palacus and his ally Tasius, king of the Roxolanians, and succeeded in occupying the eastern parts of the Bosporanian empire.[22] The third campaign was necessary, because Saumacus, another king of the Scythians, killed the Bosporanian king Pairisades V. As a consequence, Mithridates, as *prostates* and new king of the Bosporanian empire, had to send Diophantus against Saumacus. Diophantus thus conquered the royal residence of Panticapaeum, captured Saumacus, brought him to Mithridates and “erected the rule for king Mithridates Eupator”.[23] For territorial control and royal representation, Diophantus also founded the Fort Eupatorium, (Strabo 7,4,7 [C 312]): “when he was leading the army of Mithridates”.

Possibly in the same time, another Pontic *strategos*, Neoptolemus, fought the Scythians in the Karkinitis bay, as Strabo informs us.[24] These fights were resulting in the capture of Phanagoreia (today: Taman) and Gorgippia along with their surrounding lands at the east side of Lake Maeotis (today the Sea of Azov) until the river Tanaïs (today the river Don).[25] The city of Tanaïs was the biggest and most important *emporion* of that region.[26] It was a center for the trading routes in the whole south-Russian

[20] See therefore Rubinsohn, 1980: 50–70; Rostovzeff, 1951: 230f.

[21] IOSPE I² 352, l. 8–12; McGing, 1986: 52.

[22] IOSPE I² 352, l. 16–34.

[23] See IOSPE I² 352, l. 34–44; quotation: ibd., l. 44.

[24] See Strabo 2,1,16 (C 73); 7,3,18 (C 307).

[25] This is evident by Strabo 7,4,6 (C 311); concerning Tanaïs see: App. Mith 15. For a geographical overview see Heinen, 2006: 6–10.

[26] Strabo 7,4,5 (C 310).

area using the waterways of the rivers Volga and Don and one of the northern endpoints of the Silk Road.[27]

The western part of the Bosporanean kingdom was subsequently conquered by Neoptolemus.[28] He annexed the *polis* of Olbia on the river Borysthenes (today the river Bug), a colony of the Milesians, as well as the *polis* of Tyras situated on the estuary of the river Tyras (today the Dniester River), which had both been put under pressure by Scythian invasions.[29] In the south-east of Tyras, near to the village of Hermionax, he founded a fortress, Pyrgos Neoptolemou – the "Tower of Neoptolemus".[30]

Thus, the Crimea and Bosporanian kingdom came under Mithridates' control, though without being incorporated into the Pontic kingdom. Mithridates rather ruled both territories as king of Pontus and as king of the Bosporans in person. Strabo, dealing with the character of the Bosporan residence at Panticapaeum, explains the matter of fact (Strabo 7,4,4 [C 310]):[31]

> "(Panticapaeum) is a colony of the Milesians. For a long time it was related as a monarchy by the dynasty of Leuco, Satyrus, and Parisades, as were also all the neighbouring settlements near the mouth of Lake Maeotis on both sides, until Parisades gave over the sovereignty to Mithridates. They were called tyrants (ἐκαλοῦντο δὲ τύραννοι), although most of them, beginning with Parisades and Leuco, proved to be equitable rulers. And Parisades was actually held in honour as god. The last of these monarchs also bore the name Parisades, but he was unable to hold out against the barbarians, who kept exacting greater tribute than before, and he therefore gave over the sovereignty to Mithridates Eupator (Μιθριδάτῃ τῷ Εὐπάτορι παρέδωκε τήν ἀρχήν)."

Strabo is absolutely clear: In addition to his Pontic position, Mithridates took over the formerly dynastic rule of the Spartocids and as a consequence also their official title as "*tyrannos*".[32] In addition to Strabo's account a fragment of Memnon informs us, that Mithridates relieved the Scythian

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[27] See Rostovzeff, 1955: 999. 1016. See also in the case of Dioscurias Strabo 11,2,16 (C 498); McGing, 1986: 60.

[28] See McGing, 1986: 54.

[29] Olbia/Borysthenes: Strabo 7,3,17 (C 306); Tyras: Strabo 7,3,15 (C 305f.); concerning the Scythians in this area: IOSPE I^2 34; McGing, 1986: 55f.

[30] Strabo 7,3,16 (C 306); Rostovzeff, 1951: 232.

[31] Translation of Jones, 1983: 237–239.

[32] Concerning Parisades and the dynasty of the Spartocidians see Werner, 1955: 412–444.

kings of their rule after his victory over Saumacus and assumed the rule himself.[33] According to these legal functions he possessed the competence to rule the Bosporanian kingdom and the right of administrative access. Therefore Strabo illustrates as result of this policy (Strabo 7,4,6 [C 311]):

> "Further the people of this region (of Chersonesus), together with those of the Asiatic districts (σὺν τοῖς Ἀσιανοῖς χωρίοις) round about Sindice, used to pay as tribute (φόρον) to Mithridates one hundred and eighty thousand medimni and also two hundred talents of silver."34

In regard of the character and self-contained status of the Bosporan kingdom connected in a personal union to the Pontic ruler it is interesting that Mithridates installed his son Machares as viceroy in Panticapaeum during the Second Mithridatic War.[35]

In a next step Mithridates stretched his influence towards the Greek *poleis* on the western coast of the Black Sea. According to Appian, Mithridates came to rule these cities, when he gained control of the Pontic *poleis* after capturing Colchis.[36] However, we learn from an honorary inscription for Epitynchanon, son of Menecrates, from Tarsos, that Mithridates kept a *symmachia* with the *polis* of Apollonia. Epitynchanon commanded some garrison troops there, which Mithridates had sent to Apollonia for its protection.[37] Maybe also the other Greek cities in the western Black Sea, Istros, Tomis, Burziaon, Callatis, Parthenopolis and Mesembria, stayed in a similar way closely connected to Mithridates, though not being under his direct rule.[38] At least during the 3rd Mithridatic War we find them all as loyal allies of the Pontic king, which Licinius Lucullus had to conquer in hard fights one after another.[39]

After the campaigns of Neoptolemus, Mithridates obviously tried to conquer the Scythian hinterland. In 92/1 BC he kept on fighting against

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[33] Memn./FGrHist. 434 F 1,22,4. For Memnon of Heracleia see Bittner, 1998, concerning the text see in particular 186f.

[34] Translation of Jones, 1983: 243.

[35] App. Mith. 67 (281); Rostovzeff ,1951: 232.

[36] App. Mith. 15.

[37] IGBulg. 1^2 392, l. 7f.; McGing, 1986: 57.

[38] Concerning the relationship of Mithridates towards the cities see Avram / Bounegru, 2006: 397–413; Gaggero, 1978, 294–305.

[39] See in detail McGing, 1986: 58; Callatis entered only 71 BC into a contract with Rome: CIL 1^2 2676; concerning Mesembria see also IGBulg. 1^2 314a. Plut. Mor. 324 C; de fort. Rom.

Sarmatian and Bastarnian tribes.[40] But from the beginning of the 1st Mithridatic War its seems that these tribes, or a least some of them, had become his trustworthy allies.[41] By this kind of treaties Mithridates obviously built up a far-reaching network of allies reaching until the hinterland of the western Black Sea *poleis*. Appian mentions his good relations to Celts in the lower Danube area as well as to the Sauromatic tribes of Basileioi, Iazyges and Corallians.[42] All of them, as the Bastarnoi and the Thracians from the Danube, the Rhodope mountains and the Haemus mountains, sent auxiliary troops to the Pontic army in the wars against Rome.[43] These far reaching connections are also briefly illustrated by Pomp. Trog./Iust. 38,3,6f.:

> "Post haec Mithridates intellecto quantum bellum suscitaret, legatos ad Cimbros, alios ad Gallograecos et Sarmatas Bastarnasque auxilia petitum mittit. Nam omnes has gentes Romanum meditabundus bellum variis beneficiorum muneribus iam ante inlexerat."
>
> "After that Mithridates understood what a great war he unleashed, and he sent envoys to the Cimbri, others to the Gallograeci, the Sarmatians and Bastarnians to ask for auxiliary troops. Indeed, he had won all these tribes long before by various presents of benefactions, when he was thinking about the Roman war."

The mission of these troops and their fighting for Mithridates demonstrate that we are facing more than only diplomatic contacts. It rather seems that Mithridates built up a network of close and politically controlled allies beyond the area of his direct influence gained either by conquest or military 'protection', regulated by a treaty as in the case of Apollonia.[44]

One may thus conclude that intensive connections existed between Mithridates and the whole area between the region of the southern Danube bend and the northern frontier of the Roman province of Macedonia. In other words: The edges of Mithridates' influence reached across the Balkans to the frontiers of the Roman empire, to the Roman provinces of Illyria, Macedonia and Graecia, and, ensured by contacts, to the Cimbri and Scordiscoi, both actually dangerous enemies of Rome.

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[40] Plut. Mor. 324 C; de fort. Rom. 11; McGing, 1986: 61.

[41] Pomp.Trog./Iust. 38,3,6; App. Mith 15,19; McGing, 1986: 60.

[42] To the Celts: AMit. 15; 109; to Sauramtic tribes: App. Mith 69. See also McGing, 1986: 62.

[43] App. Mith 13; 15; 69; Iust. 38,3,6; Cass. Dio 36,9,3f.; see also McGing, 1986: 62.

[44] For a similar symmachia network of smaller poleis in Lycia, comparable to the western Euxine case see Schuler, 2014: 296–298.

Closing the Circle: The Invasion of Colchis

Almost at the same time, when Mithridates built up this western network of influence, he endeavored to occupy the eastern fringe of the Black Sea. According to a remark of Pompeius Trogus, Mithridates might have claimed his power in Colchis by will (Iust. 38,7,10):[45] […], *quod solus regum omnium non paterna solum, verum etiam extrema regna hereditatibus propter munificentiam adquisita possideat, Colchos, Paphlagoniam, Bosphorum* – "[…], because he as the only of all kings possessed not only the paternal, but also foreign/external kingships as the Colchi, Paphlagonia and the Bosporus, gotten in addition by inheritances because of his generosity."

In fact Mithridates had to conquer the Colchian land to join the Bosporan and the Pontic kingdom and to establish direct territorial control. But different from the Bosporan kingdom he incorporated Colchis into the territory of the Pontic kingdom, as Strabo 12,3,1 explains:[46]

> "As for Pontus, Mithridates Eupator established himself as king of it; and he held the country bounded by the Halys River as far as the Tibarani and Armenia, and held also, of the country this side the Halys, the region extending to Amastris and to certain parts of Paphlagonia. And he acquired, not only the sea-coast towards the west as far as Heracleia, (…), but also, in the opposite direction, the sea-coast extending to Colchis and Lesser Armenia, and this, as we know, he added to Pontus (προσέθηκε τῷ Πόντῳ)."

Thus, Colchis became part of the Pontic kingdom and was directly ruled by Mithridates. Obviously this is the reason why the administration of Colchis with its two *skeptuchiai* was entrusted to Moaphernes as *hyparchos* and *dioiketes*.[47] Unlike the Bosporan kingdom this is one of the rare cases, in which the 'state territory' was really increased by incorporation.[48] At about the same time, Antipatros, the son of Sisis, gave the rule of Lesser

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[45] See also Strab. 12,3,1 (C 541); 3,28 (C 555); McGing, 1986: 58. Concerning the conquest see Memn./FGrHist. 434 F 1,22,3; McGing, 1986: 59. Strab. 11,2,13 (C 496); 18 (C 498).

[46] Translated by Jones, 1969: 371.

[47] See Strab. 11,2,13 (C 496); 18 (C 498). Moaphernes was not only a *philos* – friend – of the king, he was also the maternal uncle of Strabo.

[48] In contrast see Rostovzeff, 1951: 233, who understands Colchis as a satrapy without any proof.

Armenia to Mithridates.[49] Because of its wealthy silver deposits, this country was of special interest for Mithridates. In consequence, he built 75 treasure castles (*gazophylakiai*) in the Paryadres mountains, of which Haydara, Basgoidariza and Sinoria were important for the protection of the frontier with Greater Armenia. Thus, Lesser Armenia became a part of the Pontic kingdom, and was incorporated in an analogous way as Colchis before.[50]

The royal palace of Mithridates at Cabeira in the Paryadres mountains seems to indicate that Lesser Armenia had the status of a royal domain or a crown estate, though we have no information on a viceroy, satrap, *dioiketes* or any other governor. Only the eastern part of the Black Sea between Colchis and the *polis* of Gorgippia failed to join the Pontic and the Bosporan possessions of Mithridates. It was particularly difficult to access because of the Corax mountain as western part of the Caucasus. Although not subdued, some of the tribes there, such as the Achaioi, fought later in the 3rd Mithridatic War as allies of the Pontic king.[51] Nevertheless, after these campaigns Mithridates controlled almost the entire coastline of the Black Sea, as Strabo 12,3,2 (C 541) points out:

> "Now Eupator reigned over the whole of this sea-coast, beginning at Colchis and extending as far as Heracleia, but the parts further on, extending as far as the mouth of the Pontus and Calchedon, remained under the rule of the king of Bithynia." Eckhard Olshausen even labelled the Black Sea a "mare Mithridaticum".[52]

This term implies understanding the development of various conquests, inheritances and alliances as well as the heterogeneous diversity of dependency to Mithridates as the formation of an empire. If so, Mithridates succeeded in building up a large-scale 'empire' by an aggressive policy in a northern direction as well as between both expanding great powers, the Roman empire in the west and the Parthian and Armenian empires in the east. Conflicts with Rome only arose when Mithridates began to further extend his interests in Asia Minor, in particular in Cappadocia, Paphlagonia and Bithynia.

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[49] Strabo 12,3,28 (C 555).

[50] See Strabo 12,3,1.

[51] App. Mith. 67.

[52] Olshausen, 2000: 279.

Expansion in Asia Minor

The stumbling block for the wars between Rome and Mithridates was the latter's aggressive policy against Cappadocia. Without details to the escalation of the conflict, the way of accession as well as the status of political influence are both significant for Mithridates' dynamic formation of an empire. All his efforts were aiming at ruling Cappadocia as a self-contained kingdom. After the death of the Cappadocian king Ariarathes V, Mithridates had the new and very young king Ariarathes VI murdered with the help of the Cappadocian noble Gordius around 116 BC[53]. Obviously Mithridates hoped to win more influence on the affairs of Cappadocia via the royal widow, his sister Laodice, and wanted to avoid a potential influence of the Bithynian king, Nicomedes III. Instead of Ariarathes VI he now installed his own son, Ariarathes IX, as king of Cappadocia with Gordius as *rector* by his side.[54] As a consequence of this aggressive usurpation the former alliance between Mithridates and Nicomedes of Bithynia broke. During the following years – until 89 BC – Mithridates strove to assert Ariarathes IX as legal ruler against the resistance and the interests of Bithynia and Rome.[55] After the visit of Marius in Cilicia in 99/8 BC the conflict between Mithridates and Rome about the succession of the Cappadocian throne escalated.[56] The details that finally brought Rome in the 1st Mithridatic war are of minor interest here, but the status of the annexed kingdom of Cappadocia is rather essential: From the very beginning Mithridates refused to incorporate Cappadocia into the Pontic kingdom like Colchis and Lesser Armenia. Instead he was aiming at installing a member of his family – be it his sister and widow queen Laodice or his son – as ruler of a sovereign, but closely connected kingdom. This 'model of influence' seems quite comparable in its administrative and legal character to the case of the Bosporan kingdom with Mithridates' son Machares as viceroy.

A significant episode during the struggle for Cappadocia took place between 116 and 109/8 BC: During that time Mithridates forged an alliance with the king of Bithynia, Nicomedes III. Each of them was interested in expanding the scope of action in these parts of Asia Minor which extend between the Roman province and their own kingdoms. Mithridates in

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53 Pomp. Trogus/Iust. 38,1,1.

54 See in detail McGing, 1986: 73–75.

55 See McGing, 1986: 76–81.

56 See McGing, 1986: 76–81; Marek, 2010: 342.

particular had the former withdrawal of Greater Phrygia still in mind. Consequently, the allied forces of Nicomedes and Mithridates invaded Paphlagonia 108 BC, and split up its territory and rule.[57] Shortly thereafter (between 108 and 103 BC) Mithridates likewise occupied (a part of) Galatia.[58] It was during that specific moment, that the policy of Mithridates towards these regions became very clear: he obviously wanted to integrate them into the Pontic kingdom and rule them directly as king of Pontus. Mithridates' foundation of a fortress Mithridatium[59] in this part of Galatia close to Pontus seems to emphasize his aims of performing direct control and achieving territorial incorporation – comparable to the foundation of Fort Eupatorium in the Bosporan kingdom.

Because of Rome's intervention, Nicomedes and Mithridates were forced to give up Paphlagonia. Mithridates claimed a hereditary right on the country by his father.[60] It is quite suspicious indeed, that Mithridates used the same kind of claim also to justify the annexation of Cappadocia.[61] Nevertheless, Nicomedes defeated him, renamed one of his sons Pylaemenes (maybe the official ruling name of the Paphlagonian kings) and installed him as king in Paphlagonia.[62] Under the threat of Rome Mithridates had to change his strategy towards Paphlagonia and Bithynia, the only kingdoms on the coast of the Black Sea which were not yet under his control. After Rome had declared Paphlagonia and Cappadocia free in 96 BC,[63] Mithridates employed Socrates Chrestus, a son of Nicomedes III and maybe identical with the so-called Pylaemenes mentioned above, for his own interests and sent him with an army to annex Bithynia still before the First Mithridatic war.[64] The Pontic king now tried to control both these independent kingdoms, Paphlagonia and Bithynia, by the 'model of vice regal rule'. The only restriction in this case was, that Socrates Chrestus was not a member of Mithridates' family.

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[57] See McGing, 1986: 66–69; in detail Marek, 2010: 342.

[58] See McGing, 1986: 70f.

[59] Strabo 12,5,2 (C 567); compare McGing, 1986: 71.

[60] Iust. 37,4,4; see also McGing, 1986: 37.

[61] AMithr. 12; McGing, 1986: 37.

[62] Iust. 37,4,8: *Atque ita filium suum mutate nomine Pylaemenen, Paphlagonum regum nomine, appellat et, quasi stirpi regiae reddidisset regnum, falso nomine tenet.* To the royal name of Pylaemenes see McGing, 1986: 37.

[63] Iust. Epit. 38,2,6f.; Strabo 12,2,11 (C 540); McGing, 1986: 69.

[64] Iust. Epit. 38,3,4; AMithr. 10; McGing, 1986: 79. For Chrestus see also Marek. 2010: 343.

It seems to be evident that Mithridates, in continuation to his Bosporan policy, now tried to build up a belt of independent kingdoms under his direct control, governed by viceroys: Cappadocia by his son Ariarathes IX and Paphlagonia and Bithynia by Socrates Chrestus. By doing so he avoided the impression that the Pontic kingdom continued expanding and might engage in the sphere of Roman interests.

Only Galatia – maybe as part of the former Phrygia – seems to be incorporated to the Pontic kingdom, obviously because of Mithridates' old hereditary claims on it. Mithridates' policy of the years between 116 and 96 BC in Asia Minor is characterized by a careful compound of political infiltration and territorial occupation, which approached but did not cross the pain threshold of Roman tolerance. B.C. McGing strikingly explains the policy:

> "Annexation may not appear a very cautious move, but given that Mithridates was ambitious to extend his power, the invasion of Paphlagonia and Galatia was about as safe an invasion as could be devised in Anatolia. It was safe because he had a powerful ally, because the countries involved were unlikely to be able to create a strong lobby in Rome, and because the Romans themselves were too busy elsewhere to pay serious attention to Asia."

Although Mithridates had to give up Paphlagonia, he successfully maintained the annexation of Galatia as a territorial extension of the Pontic kingdom in Asia Minor.[65]

Friendship with Parthia and Rome: The Delian Monument

When the Athenian Helianax, son of Asclepiodorus, was priest of Poseidon Aisius and of the Great Samothracian gods of the Dioscuri-Cabiri in 102/101 BC, he dedicated a *naus*, the statues of the deities as well as shields of honour for them and for the king Mithridates Eupator Dionysus alike.[66] The inner part of monument in the Samothraceion of Delos is decorated with a frieze of *tondi*, showing portrait busts with commentary inscriptions below:

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[65] See McGing, 1986: 71, n. 19.

[66] See the dedication inscription I.Delos 1563. The date becomes clear in combination with I. Delos 1902, which assigns the office of Helianax to the year of the archon Echecratus at Athens.

At the western wall (from south to north):

- Gaius, the son of Hermaius, from Amisus (according to Plut. Pomp. 42 *syntrophos* of the king Mithridates)[67]
- --?-os, the son of Antipatrus, first of the royal friends, minister (*tetagmenos*) and secretary (*epi tou aporretou*)[68]
- Dorylaius, the son of Philetairus, from Amisus, *syntrophos*, chief of the bodyguard (? *epi tou engcheiridou*), minister (*tetagmenos*) and the one who is about the troops of the king (*epi tou dynameon basileos*)[69]

At the northern wall (from west to east):

- Diophantus, the son of Mitharus, from Gaziura (without further title!)[70]
- King Ariarathes Philometor, the son of the king Ariarathes Epiphanes Philopator (king of Cappadocia, but here without regional identification)[71]
- King Antiochus Epiphanes Philometor Callinicus, the son of king Demetrius and of the queen Cleopatra (Seleucid king, but here without regional identification)[72]
- Asklepiodorus, the father of Helianax[73]
- Mithradates Eu(--?), (-?-) of the king Arsakes and -?- (*epi ton* ---) (without regional identification)[74]

At the eastern wall (from north to south):

- Dor---? --?-rates, of the first friends of the Great King of Kings Arsakes (without regional identification)[75]
- Unknown portrait: the tondo is fragmentary and the inscription is destroyed
- Papias, the son of Menophilus, from Amisus, of the first royal friends, personal physician (*archiiatros*), minister (*tetagmenos*) and "the one who is about the hidden" (*epi ton anakriseon*)[76]

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67 I.Delos 1570; Kreuz, 2009: 137; McGing, 1986: 91.
68 I.Delos 1571; Kreuz, 2009: 137.
69 I.Delos 1572; Kreuz, 2009: 137; McGing, 1986: 91.
70 I.Delos 1574; Kreuz, 2009: 137.
71 I.Delos 1576; Kreuz, 2009: 137.
72 I.Delos 1552; Kreuz, 2009: 137.
73 Kreuz, 2009: 137.
74 I.Delos 1582; Kreuz, 2009: 137.
75 I.Delos 1581; Kreuz, 2009: 137.
76 I.Delos 1573; Kreuz, 2009: 137.

At first sight, these *tondi* illustrate the inner circle of the Mithridates' royal court. High-ranking officials, personal friends (*philoi*) and important diplomats are surrounding the king, probably seen in the damaged armored statue with the general's cloak.[77] However, members of the royal family, especially the sons ruling neighboring kingdoms such as Machares at the Bosporan kingdom are missing. On closer inspection the monument rather seems to be an illustration of Mithridates' international alliance network, as it mentions Ariarathes VII, the nephew of Mithridates as ruling king of Cappadocia,[78] Antiochus VIII Grypus, the Seleucid king of Syria, or Mithridates II, the Arsacid king of the Parthian empire, directly and prominently named though in indirect relation.[79]

In addition to the personalized texts of the *tondi*, the dedication inscription on the front gable is very important: It tells us, that the honouring for Mithridates is done ὑπὲρ τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Ἀθηναίων καὶ τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Ῥωμαίων[80] – "in the interest of the people of the Athenians and of the people of the Romans". Beyond the discussion of the exact meaning of this inscription, it becomes evident, that the monument of Helianax was obviously dedicated in agreement with both, Athens and Rome, and legalized by a decree in each people's assembly. In consequence, Mithridates is presented as a Hellenized king and *amicus et socius populi Romani*. The close relationship to Athens is further documented by an Athenian inscription, erected shortly after 102 BC naming Mithridates among the *philoi* – "friends" – of the city.[81] The close connections to Rome are confirmed by a dedication of Mithridates VI to the temple of Iupiter Capitolinus at Rome at the same time (101 BC). The bilingual inscription names the Pontic king as *amicus et socius populi Romani* respectively as τὸν φίλον καὶ σύμμαχον αὐτοῦ.[82] This diplomatic success may have been the merit of a certain Naimonus, mentioned in the Capitolinian inscription, a former

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[77] See Højte, 2009b: 157; compare also Erciyas, 2006: 146.

[78] Mithridates murdered Ariarathes VII in 100/99 BC and replaced him by his own son Ariarathes IX: see McGing, 1986: 75.

[79] See McGing, 1986: 91 with further literature. McGing points out the importance of the relations to the Arsacid king, quoted twice in this monument, and in one of these cases with his full, original oriental title as Great King. Because of the Hellenistic rulers Erciyas. 2006: 146 understands Mithridates' monument as a "sign of his prominence in the Aegean".

[80] IG 1562.

[81] SEG XXVI (1976/77), 199, l. 3.

[82] OGIS 375, l. 4; SEG XLIX (1999), 1374.

Armenian general of Mithridates.[83] We learn from Diodorus, that this very Naimonus was the leader of a Pontic embassy to Rome, who tried to bribe the senate.[84] Remarkably Naimonus is missing in the Delian monument. Instead Gaius (son of Hermaius), a *syntrophos* of the king is mentioned, whose partly Latin name is rather unusual and maybe reflects relationships to Italy.

Summarizing, the Delian monument shows Mithridates in a very prominent place as a Hellenistic king under the patronage of Rome and illustrates his diplomatic network with the Roman empire, the Greek world of Athens, the Parthian empire, the Seleucid kingdom and the Cappadocian kingdom, converging in his person. Mithridates successfully established this network of diplomatic relations of bilateral alliances between the Pontic king and (normally) autonomous states, and beyond the level of direct royal control to dependent allies as the poleis and tribes on the western range of the Black Sea. It is interesting to note that Mithridates presented his connections to Cappadocia on a level of those to Rome or Parthia, this is as diplomatic alliance between autonomous partners, free of direct personal control. The absence of some other Pontic allies as the Bithynian king Nicomedes III, the Ptolemies of Egypt or Tigranes, the king of Greater Armenia can easily be explained, as they came into Mithridates' focus later: Nicomedes III had invaded Cappadocia with Loadice's support (103/2 BC) shortly before the dedication was written, thus breaking the former alliance with the Pontic king.[85] Tigranes only became important after his accession as king of Armenia in 96/5 BC[86] and the Ptolemies were forced into an alliance with Mithridates much later under their king Ptolemy IX.[87] Memnon of Heracleia gives by a short notice an impression of the intensity, this diplomatic network had in the east: Mithridates won as "allies the Parthians, the Medes, Tigranes of Armenia, the Phrygian kings and Iberia".[88]

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[83] AMithr. 19.72; SEG XLIX (1999), 1374.

[84] Diod. 36,15,1–3.

[85] See Iust. 38,1,2; McGing, 1986: 74f.

[86] See McGing, 1986: 78; Badian, 1964: 176 with n. 49.

[87] See Hölbl, 1994: 190–192.

[88] Memnon/FGrHist 434 F 1,22,4 (see Bittner, 1998: 186f.): συμμάχους δὲ Πάρθους καὶ Μήδους καὶ Τιγράνην Ἀρμένιον καὶ τοὺς Φρυγῶν βασιλεῖς καὶ τὸν Ἴβηρα προσηταιρίζετο.

Spot-light on the Realm: The New Possessions of the First Mithridatic War

When the First Mithridatic war broke out in 89 BC Pontic troops invaded the Bithynian kingdom and brought and end to the complicated history of Pontic-Bithynian relationship for the time being. Furthermore, by his invasion to Roman Asia Minor Mithridates succeeded in winning extensive territories which had now to be organized in administration and government. Therefore, Mithridates installed governors of his royal court in various regions of western Asia Minor, who were called by the old Achaemenid title 'satraps'. Appian informs us: "After appointing satraps over various nations (σατράπας δὲ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐπιστήσας), he proceeded to Magnesia, Ephesus and Mytilene, all of which received him gladly."[89]

Leonippus is also referred to as satrap in an inscription from Nysa:[90]

Βασιλ[εὺς Μιθριδ]άτη Λεωνίππῳ σατράπῃ [χαί]ρειν.

C.B. Welles argued that Leonippus was the satrap of Caria,[91] although any specification is missing in the inscription. Be it as it may the inscription confirms the literary evidence that the Iranian title satrap has been in official use. Furthermore, it demonstrates, that Leonippus had administrative, in particular judicial power in (parts of) western Asia Minor, and maintained close contact with the Pontic king.[92] Also another honorific inscription from Carian Stratoniceia mentions this satrap.[93]

Obviously, this procedure of installing satraps reflects an administrative concept developed especially for the western, newly occupied parts of the Pontic empire. Mithridates even appointed satraps on the mainland of northern Greece during the invasion of 87 BC,[94] as Appian (Mithr. 35) mentions:

> "At the same time Arcathias, the son of Mithridates, with another army invaded Macedonia and without difficulty overcame the small Roman force

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89 AMithr. 21.

90 See Welles, 1966, 295–297; McGing, 1986: 117. 157. Welles, 1966: 295 Nr. 73,l. 1f. = Syll.^{3} 741, I–IV; Bagnall / Derow, 2004: 104f.; Welles. 1966: 295.

91 Welles, 1966: 297.

92 This Leonippus seems to be identical with the Armenian general in the command of Sinope, fighting against L. Lucullus in the Second Mithridatic war. Memn./FGrHist. 434 F37,1 (Bittner, 1998: 206f.); according to this notice Leonippus has been the Mithridatic *strategos* in Sinope as his colleagues Seleucus and Cleochares, by whom he has been murdered. See also Olshausen, 1974: 167; Welles, 1966: 297.

93 Stratonikeia: SEG XXXVIII (1988), 1108.

94 See McGing, 1986: 99.

> there, subjugated the whole country, appointed satraps (καὶ σατράπαις ἐπιτρέψας), and himself advanced against Sulla, but was taken sick and died near Tisaeum."

A regularly organized system of satraps according to the former Achaemenid example seems to be further substantiated by SEG XLVII (1997) 1125, documenting their subordinates, the hyparchs, from Histria in Moesia, around the same time.

Although the evidence for both these titles is clear, their specific meaning in this context and in the use by Mithridates remains uncertain. Most of the written sources describe these satraps in their responsibility to various *ethne* without clear specification. Nor the inscriptions name any local apposition for defining the administrative ascertainment. Thus the territorial allocation of their responsibility, even the installation of satrapies as administrative units are not identifiable. Also the inner structure of these satrapies remains obscure. We don't even have a proof, that hyparchs regularly had been the representatives of the Mithridatic satraps.

However, it is clear in general: Mithridates VI installed satraps as governors in the newly conquered parts of western Asia Minor. Because there is no further information about the inner structure of the Pontic kingdom, we do not know anything about satrapies elsewhere.[95] Thus we might conclude: The newly conquered regions in western Asia Minor became parts of a Mithridatic Empire, but not of the Pontic kingdom. They were organized by installing an imperial administration system – the satrapies – under direct control of the king, but obviously not as provincial categories of Pontus itself.

Even if we know little about the satrapal administration of the Mithidatic Empire, the Greek *poleis* were certainly never part of it. In their eyes Mithridates appeared as ideal (or idealized) Hellenistic king offering them *eleutheria, autonomia kai demokratia*.[96] In the political language of the Greek poleis the Pontic king became a "*soter*" – the saviour from Roman dominion. So Mithridates has been both, a Hellenistic king (*basileus*) to the Greek cities and an oriental Great king to his eastern, non-Greek subjects. Proofs for that are the satraps, the dynastic recourse

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[95] See Højte, 2009a: 100–103. Marek, 2010: 337 assumed that the toponym endings -ene and -itis in Paphlagonia and Pontus may be an indicator for administrative units of the Pontic kingdom.

[96] See in contrary Erciyas, 2006: 176 who understands this policy of Mithridates as a disadvantage in his relations to the Greek cities.

of Mithridates to the Achaemenid kings[97] as well as his care of older Iranian (religious) traditions.[98] Finally this self-understanding of his rule is attested by an honorary decree from the Bosporan city of Nymphaion. Although fragmentary, its curious combination of Iranian and Hellenistic royal titles of Mithridates is unique:

> [Β]ασιλέα βασιλέ[ων μέγαν Μιθριδάτην Εὐπά]-| ορα Διόνυσν τὸν Ν[έον ---------- εὐ]-| Εὐεργέτην, (…)[99]
>
> "The Great King of Kings Mithridates Eupator Neos Dionysos (---) the benefactor, (…)"

The use of the title "Great King of Kings" in an official inscription shows much more for the self-understanding of the king than any literary attestation influenced by the Roman point of view. The title denotes Mithridates VI as the legal representative of an empire, politically superordinated to his satraps and hyparchs, beyond his ancestral position as king of Pontus which he additionally held in personal union. I would argue that this title, attested in the inscription, is much more than a sign of megalomania of a king constructing a dynastic and maybe political relation to famous ancestors like Cyrus, Darius or Seleucus I.[100] It rather shows Mithridates' self-understanding: apart from their various status the regions were parts of an empire under his rule. The diversity of its structure seems to remind one of Alexander's Empire: Persian-style satrapies besides free Greek *poleis*, kingdoms under royal control and allies.[101] This perfectly fits the

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[97] See Iust. 38,3.

[98] See AMithr. 66 who refers that Mithridates made the sacrifice "as the kings of the Persians did in Pasargadae".

[99] SEG XXXVII (1987), 668.

[100] According to Iust. 38,7,1: "*Se autem, seu nobilitate illis conparetur, clariorem illa conluvie convenarum esse, qui paternos maiores suos a Cyro Darioque, conditoribus Persici regni, maternos a magno Alexandro ac Nicatore Seleuco, conditoribus imperii Macedonici, referat, (...)*.". Compare AMithr, 9. To the possibility that these informations might result from an official version of royal representation see Olshausen, 1974: 157; see also Geyer, 1932a: 2159. Concerning the genealogical constructions see Lerouge-Cohen, 2017: 227–233.

[101] In my opinion the use of the term 'satrapies' as well as the dynastic references to the Achaemenid kings don't enforce the assumption of a direct recourse on the Achaemenid empire an (so Welles, 1966: 297) and would exclude a referring to Alexander's empire. Concerning satrapies beneath free Greek in Alexander's empire see Dmitriev, 2005: 291–297.

Mithridatic coins, which are the money of a king and an empire imitating that of Alexander.[102]

Structure and Order

Thus the ‚Mithridatic Empire' seems to be structured in different political, administrative and legal parts: its core was Pontus as the homeland of Mithridates, ruled by himself as Pontic king. Some very close neighboring areas, such as Colchis, Lesser Armenia, the eastern parts of Paphlagonia and maybe Galatia were occupied and incorporated into the kingdom of Pontus. So, these became parts of the core kingdom. Beyond this form of government and administration they are also characterized by a specific legal status as 'inherited kingdoms' as Pomp. Trog./Iust points out:[103]

> *"*[…] *et illa indicia habere, quod solus regnum omnium non paterna solum, verum etiam externa regna hereditatibus propter munificentiam adquisita possideat, Colchos, Paphlagoniam, Bosp(h)orum."*
>
> "[…] and he had as proof, that he possessed as the one of all kings not only the paternal kingdom, but also external kingdoms, which he received by inheritance because of his generosity, Cochis, Paphlagonia and the Bosporan (kingdom)."

Within the empire the (former) kingdoms of the Bosporans, Cappadocia and finally Bithynia were of utmost strategical importance. They were not incorporated in the Pontic kingdom, but under direct control of Mithridates they formed a ‚belt of regencies' mostly ruled by his sons. They seem to be governed as sovereign kingdoms in kind of secondo-genitors.

A further ‚belt' was formed by the territories conquered by Mithridates and ruled by satrapes. They were located in the west of the Pontic kingdom, the areas that were conquered in Asia Minor and Macedonia. Due of the title "Great King of the Kings" it seems possible that also the administration of the Caspian tribes (see McGing, 1986: 57: speaking of a kind of "protectorate") was organized in similar way. Although the status of this area remains uncertain, the tribes were conquered between 115

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[102] For the imitation of Alexander on Mithridatic coins see Højte 2009b, 150. Concerning the new emissions of silver tetradrachmoi in Pergamum and of golden stateres in Ephesos, Erythrai, Milet, Smyrna und Tralleis see McGing, 1986: 112. For the royal coins of the Pontic kings, and especially of Mithridates' VI see Erciyas, 2006: 125–134.

[103] Iust. 38,7,10.

and 110 BC, stayed under direct control of Mithridates, but were never clearly incorporated into Pontus, as Colchis was, nor were ruled by one of Mithridates' sons as viceroy.

In all territories under Mithridates' control, either organized as satrapies or in another way, the Greek *poleis* kept the status of free and autonomous cities. Usually they were connected to the Pontic king by treaties of symmachia, as demonstrated for Mesembria and Apollonia at the western fringe of the Black Sea (see the inscription of Apollonia IGBulg. 12 392 and of Mesembria IGBulg. 12 314). These 'allied' *poleis*, in western Asia Minor (e.g. Pergamum, the new, western residence of Mithridates[104]) as well as on the western coast of the Black Sea (see Apollonia) or even Athens[105] were hold under military control by the Pontic king.[106]

Beyond these cities we find the allied tribes of the Scythian and Danubian region: the Roxolanes, Sarmates, Iazygi, Bastarnes, Getae, parts of the northwestern Thracians, the Scordiscoi, the Thracian Celts and probably some eastern parts of the Cimbri.[107] Most of them are known as loyal Pontic auxiliaries still in the Third Mithridatic War fighting against the Roman invasion of M. Lucullus.[108] The fact that their troops stayed under Pontic command and involved themselves in a fight against Rome seems to indicate a close relationship to the dominion of Mithridates.[109]

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[104] Concerning Pergamum as residence of Mithridates see in detail Reinach, 1895: 120f.

[105] For honors Athens declared to Mithridates see Habicht, 1994: 216–223. To the military control of the city according to Mithridates' interests see the case of Aristion, established as ryrant of the city, obviously standing under the command of the Pontic strategos Archelaus 88 BC after the occupation of Delos: Strabo 9,1,20 (C 398).

[106] Concerning the Pontic garrisons in the Greek cities of western Asia Minor see AMithr. 23; Liv. per. 79; Oros. 6,2,8; Magie, 1950: 234, Dmitriev, 2005: 249f. To the Pontic garrison in the *polis* of Heraclea Pontica see Memn./FGrHist. 434 F1,29,4 (= Bittner, 1998: 105f.): 4000 men under the command of the Celtic *phrourarchos* Connacorex; see Olshausen, 1974: 169.

[107] Iust. 38,3,6.

[108] App. Mith. 15; Iust. 38,3,6; Cass. Dio 36,9,3f.

[109] This background of Mithridatic relations to the cities and tribes in the Euxine area and beyond, certainly emphasizes the statement of Schuler 2014, 298, that the importance of *symmachiai* in the (late) Hellenistic time is greatly underestimated. The case of the diplomatic network of Mithridates is certainly another example against the proposition of Baltrusch 2008, 38, that the highlight of *symmachiai* has been classical Greece, terminated by the rise of the Hellenistic monarchies.

This incorporation of allied auxiliary forces into the Pontic army is certainly a main factor which characterizes the difference to Mithridates' alliance with further empires and kingdoms. The latter form a network of interstate alliances connecting the whole Hellenistic world by Mithridates: Thus he was allied with Mithridates II of the Arsacid kingdom,[110] with Tigranes of the Armenian kingdom,[111] with Antiochus VIII of the Seleucid kingdom, with Rome, and finally also with Ptolemy IX of Egypt.[112] Mithridates even succeeded to marry two of his daughters, Mithridatis and Nysa, to Ptolemaic princes, Ptolemaios XII, the further king of Egypt, and Ptolemy of Cyprus.[113] Maybe it was also this diplomatic network beyond the Mithridatic "empire" which additionally threatened the Romans. In the speech of Pelopidas after the capture of Cappadocia Appian outlines the hierarchy and structure of the Mithridatic empire:

App. Mithr. 15:[114]

> "You should bear in mind that Mithridates is ruling his ancestral domains, which is 20,000 stades long, and that he has acquired many neighbouring nations, the Colchians, a very warlike people, the Greeks bordering on the Euxine, and the barbarian tribes beyond them. He has allies (φίλοις) also ready to obey his every command, Scythians, Taurians, Bastarnaae, Thracians, Sarmatians, and all those who dwell in the region of the Don and Danube and the sea of Azov. Tigranes of Armenia is his son-in-law and Arsaces of Parthia his ally (φίλος)."

Even the relationship to Rome remained part of this category of influence: In particular by the so-called peace of Dardanus (84 BC) Mithridates strengthened his status as "*amicus et socius populi Romani*".

So the overall structure and the intensity of Mithridatic control outlined a system of spheres, marking an empire with the core homeland and adjacent ‚safety zones' of dependent allies. Thus, Mithridates succeeded to establish a huge empire (the whole Black Sea area and Asia Minor) between Armenia and Parthia in the east and the Roman Empire in the west. In consequence, the Hellenistic and Iranian orientation of Mithridates is

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[110] AMithr. 13 (44); 15 (54); Cass. Dio 36,1,1; 3,1. Mithridates of Media has also been the son in law of Tigranes: see Cass. Dio 36,1,1; 14,2.

[111] See Iust. 38,3 5: "hoc cogniti Mithridates societatem cum Tigrane bellum adversus Romanos gesturus iungit".

[112] Hölbl, 1994: 190–192; Lampela, 1998: 223.

[113] Aciv. I 102; Mithr. 111 (536); Hölbl, 1994: 192.

[114] Translation of White, 1955: 265.

not the result of his chameleon-like character (Mileta, 2007, 377), but it is a basic element of his integrative policy. This is perfectly expressed by the royal titles of the Nymphaion inscription combining the Iranian title of the Great king with the Hellenistic designation as *Euergetes* and *Neos Dionysos*. The various 'spheres of influence' can be illustrated in the following model of administrative hierarchy:
Inside the structure:
Mithridates as "Great king of the kings" and "basileus euergetes" rules

1. the ancestral core kingdom:
   Pontus (with the incorporated parts of Colchis, Lesser Armenia, Paphlagonia, maybe Galatia)
2. regencies in a kind of secondo-genitur:
   Bosporan kingdom, Cappadocia, Bithynia (for a while)
3. satrapies: in western Asia Minor, e.g. Caria, and Macedonia
4. free cities in symmachia:
   at the western Black Sea as Apollonia Mesembria, in western Asia Minor Pergamon, Milet, Ephesos etc.
5. allied tribes (in symmachia):
   Roxolanes, Sarmates, Iazygi, Bastarnes, Getae, parts of the north-western Thracians, the Scordiscoi, the Thracian Celtes, the eastern Cimbri

Outside the imperial structure:

6. other allied empires and kingdoms:
   Rome, Greater Armenia, Parthia, Seleucid Syria, Ptolemaic Egypt

This overview emphasizes once more that the status and manner of governing under the control of Mithridates VI was not been accidental or arbitrary. In fact, the different governing systems (kingdoms, viceroys, satrapies, poleis, allied tribes) seem to reflect the multiplicity of administration in the empire, and a kind of hierarchy. The clear assignment of a particular status to these administrative units by Mithridates makes clear, how he used this system from the very beginning to construct an empire in the style of Alexander's. It is remarkable that only very few, immediately neighbouring regions were incorporated into the core of the Pontic kingdom. It is also remarkable, that all these regions were of little interest to Rome, Armenia, or Parthia. Strategically and economically important for Pontus as they are, claiming these regions was not an aggressive assault into politically sensitive areas. In contrary to this, the kingdoms of viceroys and secondo-genitors are of another quality: Their

control was politically highly sensitive. All these kingdoms, the Bosporan as well as the Cappadocian and Bithynian fill economic and military key positions: the Bosporan kingdom was in control of the Black Sea, the Crimea and its hinterland at the great rivers (Don, Dnjeper etc.), the Bithynian kingdom was essential for the control of the Hellespont, and the Cappadocian kingdom for travel from Asia Minor to Mesopotamia. It seems to be characteristic that they all are under direct influence of Mithridates without being ruled by him personally. They stayed self-contained kingdoms, but mostly ruled by a member of the royal family. Furthermore, they all were kingdoms which were not yet under Roman dominion. Just with the access of Mithridates to them Roman interests arose in turn. Obviously Mithridates tried to compensate this conflict by his network of 'international relationships', in particular by his status as *amicus et socius populi Romani*.

Nevertheless, the related independence of the 'secondo-genitors' marks the essential difference to the satrapies. These were all established later on the territory of Roman provinces – in Asia Minor as well as in Macedonia. From this point of view the Mithridatic satrapies seemed to be only a Hellenized eastern variation of the Roman provincial system. The ostentatious Hellenized character, even with the satrapies according to the mode of the Alexandrian empire, was a core aspect for the dominion of western Asia Minor. The Greek *poleis* had a clearly defined role and position in such an imperial system which is distinctive to the Roman one. This could be the explanation for the fact, that there is no proof for a Mithridatic satrapy in Greece, and that for the Greek cities the satrapies and their Great king – originally symbols for Persian dominion in contrary to the liberty and autonomy of Greek *poleis* – were acceptable and consistent for them with the image of Mithridates as Hellenistic king.[115]

Finally, the allied tribes with obligation to provide auxiliary troops play an important but diffuse role. On the one hand, these tribes stay completely independent, a military intervention of Mithridates, as in Apollonia with its Pontic garrison, is not proved. Nevertheless, they stayed in a close alliance with Mithridates. Its description as "*symmachia*" implies the fact that the concerned tribes had concluded a contract with Mithridates in which they were committed to serve with own troops in the army of the Pontic king.

[115] Concerning this policy of Mithridates for royal legitimization see Canepa, 2017: 217–222. Miller, 2017: 49–67 pointed out that Perserie was a kind of fashion at Athens in the 1st century B.C., in which "Persia becomes a kind of mythological utopia" (66).

Beyond the political affairs in general this specific relationship illustrates a kind of submission under the control and influence of Mithridates. The way in which this was done is exemplified by the case of the Scythians in the north of the Black Sea. Rome officially objected their conquest by Mithridates.[116] Although Mithridates obeyed the wish of Rome and refrained from an occupation, he personally intensified his relation to the Scythian rulers by marrying some of his daughters to them.[117]

In fact, the allied tribes in the eastern Balkans can be seen as *socii* in the Roman sense. This specific status became a problem when they fall into Rome's sphere of interest. Especially in the territory of Thracians and Getae we know the Dardanoi, Sintoi, Enetes, Denseletes, Maedoi, Dalmatians and Scordiscoi who provided auxiliary forces to Pontus in the First Mithridatic War.[118] Immediately after Rome's victories over the Cimbri and Teutones T. Didius invaded the northeast of Thracia in 101/100 BC during his fight against the Scordiscoi and annexed the Caeneian Chersonesus to the Roman province of Macedonia.[119] In other words: Rome occupied a region which was an ally of its own friend Mithridates. Certainly this act was explosive for the relationship of Pontus and Rome: Mithridates had to experience an aggressive assault to contractual connected *socii/ symmachoi* of his empire, additionally the Romans incorporated them into their provinces, but they stayed loyal to Mithridates, as demonstrated by their military support in the First Mithridatic war. Beyond that, the treaty of Rome with Kallatis illustrates once more Rome's persistent firm interest on an access to the western Euxine poleis.[120]

Mithridates' behavior in the case of the Scordiscoi may be a reflection on his understanding of these allies. Their status, role and function can be seen as a negotiating quantity: strong enough to stake out Pontic claims on their political affiliation; on the other hand, weak enough to tolerate the loss of political access.

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[116] Memn./FGrHist. 434 F22,3f.

[117] AMithr. 108.

[118] Plut. Sulla 23; AMithr. 55f.; Eutr. 5,7,1. Concerning the relationship of Mithridates towards these tribes see Gaggero, 1978: 294–305.

[119] Plut. Lucullus 7,5; AMithr. 13; 15; 69; Cass. Dio 36,9,3f.; Blümel, 1992: 13–32, Nr. 31; see also to the Cnidian version of the Pirate's law Hassall / Crawford / Reynolds, 1974: 204, col. IV, l. 5–31; and to the Delphic version ibd.: 205- 207; Sumner, 1978: 211–225; McGing, 1986: 64.

[120] CIL 1^2 2, 2676. Avram, 1999.

An "imperium Mithridaticum"?

The previous section just illustrated a certain order and structure of the various regions standing in any way under Mithridates' control. The history and way of gaining influence with them seems mainly caused by historical events or the actual political development. On the other hand, a classification and methodology seem to unterly the structured diversity. So, it is necessary to ask if these phenomena are elements defining an *imperium* or empire.

Recently Michael Gehler and Robert Rollinger published in two volumes the proceedings of a conference held 2010 in Hildesheim on *imperium*-research.[121] In the introduction both authors tried to collect the main aspects and criteria for developing a definition of an *imperium* or an empire. The most important are:

- a large-scale formation of rule[122]
- a multitude of entities with more or less autonomy[123]
- the rule over a multitude of ethnicities,[124] especially the integration of heterogeneous ethnic groups.[125]
- reference on a kind of historical or cultural heritage[126]
- the gradation of power on the edges of an empire[127]
- partly direct rule and a dynamic development of its own.[128]
- tendencies of a kind of civilization to the inner, and at the same time granting protection to the outer areas by a frontier.[129] Especially the frontiers at the outer areas seem to be usually dynamic and flexible, with permanent conflicts in specific zones.[130]

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[121] Gehler / Rollinger, 2014.

[122] According to Osterhammel, 2009: 610; Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 3.

[123] According to Langewiesche, 2008: 217: Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 3f. Compare also Berger 2015, 530: "The success of Muslim Empire-building is another example that Empire-building is in a way the contrary of state-building. Empires are large and loose. States are small and tight."

[124] Nolte, 2008: 15; Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 4.

[125] Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 23.

[126] Nolte, 2008: 5f.; Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 4.

[127] Münkler, 2005: 11–77; Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 5.

[128] Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 5.

[129] Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 5.

[130] Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 22. 24.

- A kind of ideology, securing the legitimization of rule[131] at the same time the tolerance of religious diversity.[132]
- A centralized administration with developed textuality and with a diversity of provinces.[133]
- External balance with internal consensus. According to that the scope of rule is not identical with the scope of influence.[134]

First of all, it is the coincidental character of development which seems to attest Mithridates' domain as an *imperium*.[135] The growth of his rule certainly didn't follow a deliberate 'master-plan'. Nevertheless, the area of Mithridates' rule, control and influence reached a large scale: At the beginning of the First Mithridatic War he ruled the whole Black Sea area, whole Asia Minor, the eastern Balkan and Danube regions, and parts of Greece. At the same time the diplomatic network of the Pontic king, as partially illustrated in the monument of Delos, demonstrates the further range of influence beyond the scope of direct rule. The status as *amicus et socius populi Romani*, the friendship with the Arsacid kingdom and with Greater Armenia were elements of that range of influence as well as the diplomatic contact to the Seleucid and Ptolemaic monarchies. The difference between Mithridates' scope of influence and that of his rule is perfectly illustrated by the diverging status of the allies[136]: The former is represented by autonomous kingdoms and states as allies, the latter by the allied tribes with contractual obligation, such as, for example, providing military forces to the army of the king. It seems to be characteristic, that these regions at the edge of an empire stay in permanent conflict and in an ambiguous status, without clearly fixed frontiers.

The inner structure of the Mithridatic 'empire' fits perfectly the theoretical model: it was split up in various forms of administration (core kingdom of Pontus, vice-kingdoms, satrapies, free *poleis* etc.) with a gradation in the intensity of power, the administration was entirely focused on Mithridates, as demonstrated by the taxes delivered by the Bosporan kingdom

[131] Münkler, 2005: 35–77; Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 6. 24.
[132] Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 22.
[133] Nolte, 2008: 12–15, Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 6f. 24.
[134] Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 20.
[135] See Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 22.
[136] See Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 20.

every year.[137] Beyond this administrative order the 'empire' of Mithridates possessed a multicultural and multiethnic character. It is its power of integrative potential, which guaranteed a fast development, demonstrated by the occupation of the tribes and cities of the Black Sea coasts as well as of Asia Minor at the beginning of the First Mithridatic War. As far as we can see in in the Bosporan Kingdom, the Greek cities on the western Black Sea coast or in the Thracian and Scythian tribes, Mithridates changed the inner, indigenous organization of none of them.[138] According to Gehler and Rollinger this heterogeneity is one of the core aspects of an *imperium*.[139] Correspondingly there is no sign for religious imperialism: In particular in the case of Asia Minor the indigenous cults kept on existing as Christian Mileta prooved for the Greek *poleis*.[140] Nevertheless Mithridates' policy used a kind of ideology in the royal representation. Like Alexander the Pontic king had to answer and react to expectations and interests of very different groups in his 'empire' at the same time. In general, his royal representation relied on two prototypes: the ideal Hellenistic ruler and the Persian Great King. Both prototypes could be combined or modified in their concrete specification, as demonstrated by SEG 37 (1987), 668. The inscription from Bosporan Nymphaion entitles Mithridates firstly as "Great King of the Kings" and then with the Hellenistic epithets as "Neos Dionysos" and "Euergetes".

Iustin also describes the self-understanding of Mithridates as a combination of a Hellenistic and oriental ruler in the imitation of Alexander (Iust. 38,7,1): Mithridates claimed that "his ancestors of the father's side derived from Cyrus and Darius, the founders of the Persian empire, the maternal ones from Alexander the Great and Seleucus Nicator, the founders of the Macedonian empire".[141] Aurelius Victor (de vir. ill. 3,76) reports that Mithridates claimed to be a descendant of the "the Seven

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[137] For example Mithridates got as *phoros*-payments every year 180.000 bushels of grain and 200 talents of silver only from the Bosporanian region: Strab. 7,4,6 (C 311); McGing. 1986: 59; Rostovzeff, 1951: 233.

[138] See Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 22f.

[139] Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 10.

[140] See Mileta, 2007: 359–378; see also Olshausen, 1987, 187–212. In the same way Mithridates supported in the Greek cities the typical *polis*-organization. In Smyrna the installation of *prytaneis* is proved for the first time in the rule of Mithridates VI: see Dmitriev, 2005: 255.

[141] Concerning the dynastic connection to the royal house of the Achaemenids in detail see Lerouge-Cohen, 2017: 227–232.

Persians" who made Darius king.[142] The Pontic king obviously staged his Achaemenid heritage by sacrificing "as the Persian kings used to proceed the sacrifice at Pasargadai".[143] His children, in particular his sons wore Iranian names. From Appian we know for example Arcathias, Artaphernes, Cyrus, Oxathres, Darius and Xerxes or the daughters Orsabaris, Nysa and Mithridatis.[144] Parts of this representation were prestigious symbols of this historical heritage. So Mithridates stored in his palace at the *polis* Talaura in the Lycos valley among furniture and accessories "some pieces (…) of Darius, the son of Hystaspes",[145] for example the royal bed of the Achaemenid king.[146] In the same way Pompeius carried off Alexander's cloak from the residences of Mithridates.[147] Also Iustin creates a lot of literary references to Cyrus the Great in his description of Mithridates' youth.[148] Eckhard Olshausen saw this literary production as a result of court propaganda ("Erfolg der Hofpropaganda")[149] developed in the Pontic residences

In the same way Mithridates also symbolically staged his heritage of Alexander, for example by taking up quarters at the *Stathmou Alexandrou* in Phrygia – a place, where Alexander once had rested.[150] For the Greek *poleis* in Asia Minor this has been a signal to understand Mithridates as their new liberator and saviour (*soter*) in the sense of a Hellenistic king. Thus, they immediately answered corresponding to that political

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[142] Compare also Tac. ann. 12,18; App. Mithr. 66; Iust. 38,7,1. Concerning the relation to the dynasties of the "Seven Persians" and the Achaemenid royal family see Lerouge-Cohen, 2017: 223–227; Panitschek, 1987/88: 74. 80–82. 86. 93.

[143] We know from AMithr. 9,27 that Mithridates I. belonged to an Iranian noble house from Cios at the Propontis, was courtier of Antigonus Monophthalmus and a good friend of Demetrius Poliorcetes. In detail Bosworth / Wheatley, 1998: 155–164; Panitschek, 1987/88: 73–95. See also Olshausen, 1974: 157; Geyer, 1932a: 2159.

[144] AMithr. 41. 111. 117; Aciv. I 102; from Iust. We know the daughters Mithridatis and Nysa. For an overview to all known children of Mithridates see Geyer, 1932c: 2200.

[145] AMithr. 155.

[146] AMithr. 115 (564). 116 (570).

[147] However, Mithridates hasn't inherited it but captured it himself, when in 88 BC Cleopatra III and the royal treasury of the Ptolemies fell into his clutches: AMithr. 117 (577); concerning Cos in this context see ibid. 23 (92f.). 117 (570).

[148] See for example Iust. 1,8 and 37,3. As reference to the "Seven Persians" see Panitschek, 1987/88: 86; concerning the Achaemenian background see Gschnitzer, 1977.

[149] Olshausen, 2000: 279. In similar way Saprykin, 1994: 83–94.

[150] App. Mithr. 20. To the construction of dynastic relationship to the Macedonian kings see Lerouge-Cohen, 2017: 232f.

'language', welcomed him as *soter* and declared him, still in 89 BC, a god.[151] Therefore this policy was an essential element for Mithridates to legitimize his rule[152], to define the protecting delimitation outwards (here to the Roman empire)[153] and to justify further expansion.[154]

It is evident that in general the various forms and styles, Mithridates applied to the heterogeneous addressees in his 'empire', have nothing to do with political opportunism of a "chameleon king", but with the realization of ruling a multi-cultural empire at the interface between east and west.[155] His royal representation and ideological legitimization[156] is communicated to the different entities by Mithridates' court nobility. The Mithridates monument at Delos gives us an impression, spot-lighting a part of this elite.[157] Also the satraps are notable members who practice the communication between the king and the local affairs. The so-called Chaeremon correspondence (Syll. 3 741.742) is an epigraphic proof for such a communicative function of the satraps, who are in the words of Gehler and Rollinger: "als wesentliche Ansprechpartner imperialer Kommunikation zu betrachten (…) und die ihrerseits entscheidende Vermittlungs- und Transferdienste übernehmen".[158]

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[151] See in detail Mileta, 2007: 364. This fact combines perfectly the two main criteria in Nolte's definition of empire, the "monarchische Spitze" and the "Zusammenarbeit von Thron und Altar" (Nolte, 2008: 14).

[152] See Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 14: "Demokratische und liberale Wertvorstellungen waren dabei mit der Logik imperialer handlungs- und Rechtfertigungsmuster nicht unvereinbar." Possibly, the propaganda of liberation can be seen as part of an "raumübergreifende universelle Heilslehre" (Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 6) with distinct orientation to the western Mediterranean. See also ibid.: 24.

[153] See to this criteria according to Münkler, 2005; Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 5f.

[154] Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 11.

[155] So Stewart, 1993: 171–181. See also Panitschek, 1987/88: 94 who explains the dynastic politcy of Mithridates VI "im Einklang mit seiner imperialen Politik". However he is missing the definition of imperialism in this specific context.

[156] See Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 24: "Dies ist eingebettet in ein als Ideologie zu bezeichnendes Weltbild, das sich teilweise als ‚Agenda' bezeichnen läßt und sich als Friedens-, Kultur- und Zivilisierungsmission oder als Sicherheits- und Wohlstandsgarantie versteht. Dieses Sendungsbewußtsein ist für die innere und äußere Herrschaftsabsicherung und die damit einhergehende Legitimation essentiell."

[157] To this point of self-representation as expression of imperial power see Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 20.

[158] Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 10. For the importance of this "Trägerschicht von Herrschaftseliten" as "zentraler Mobilisierungsfaktor jedes Imperiums" see Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 23.

However, Mithridates succeeded to build up an empire in the Black Sea region which stayed stable even over all three Mithridatic Wars. Beyond the complicated affairs and diplomatic entanglements in Asia Minor this huge area under his control was the core of his empire in the sense of Nolte's "eine Welt".[159] Obviously the royal coinage was a powerful instrument for the unification process of this 'world'.[160] As V. Cojocaru pointed out, the cities of the Euxine area have formed their unity by a close interrelated Pontic network which was also an "inseparable part of the ancient world".[161]

The control of both, the *mare Mithridaticum* and the countries which extend significally inland define this empire as a combination of territorial and maritime *imperium*.[162] At the same time Mithridates' empire certainly belonged to Gehler's and Rollinger's category of war *imperia* ("Kriegsimperien") focused on the charismatic figure of a single person.[163] Finally it was certainly an "Imperium zweiter Ordnung" (Imperium of second order; empire) in Nolte's terminology[164] because it failed at the last to achieve its own dynamic ambitions and was defeated by Pompey.

According to all these criteria it seems to be evident that the area of Mithridates' dominion, control and influence must be seen as an empire – as a "See- und Landimperium", a war *imperium* and an "Imperium zweiter Ordnung". Furthermore, the development of Mithridatic rule seems to be an ideal example for the rise of an empire/*imperium* in antiquity.

If we accept the fact that the whole Black Sea region including the Scythian hinterland, the southern Danubian and Thracian area, and the Caspian region of Colchis and Lesser Armenia, as well as the whole Asia Minor and parts of Greece have to be seen as components forming this empire, this will also change the view on the political importance of Mithridates. He succeeded in establishing a new empire between the Roman empire in the west, constantly expanding to the east, and the Parthian and Armenian empires in the east, aggressively expanding to the west. In

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[159] See Nolte, 2005: 79–86; Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 6. 10.

[160] See Saprykin, 2007: 195–208; Erciyas. 2006: 179.

[161] Cojocaru. 2014: 48–57, quotation: 62. Concerning the characterization as "Pontic network" see Cojocaru, 2014: 56, n. 76 who cited a statement of H. Heinen in a letter from 2011.

[162] Concerning "See- und Landimperium" see Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 22.

[163] See Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 25.

[164] See Nolte, 2005: 79–86; Gehler / Rollinger, 2014: 6.

consequence, this also affected Mithridates' diplomatic network, especially his key political function between Parthia, Armenia, Rome and the Hellenistic monarchies, the Ptolemies and Seleucids. Accordingly, his policy has to be understood as planned around this total structure of different forms of rule and influence. Every region under his control and influence was much more than only taken individually, more or less loosely connected with the Pontic king. It was part of an extensive and sophisticated framework forming an imperial structure. Mithridates' policy in the Black Sea area, in Asia Minor as well as in the conflict with Rome has also to be seen as creation acts of this new empire. This raises the question of the inner organization of this empire in detail, which also has to be seen as an administrative system of its own.

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8th Symposium of the Melammu Project "Iranian Worlds", held at Kiel in November 2014

Sasanian rock reliefs and the British embassy, 1810–1812

Marion-Isabell Hoffmann

> "Who wants to be trained as a scientist, has to study the original works by the travellers so thoroughly, that he not only can read between the lines, but even guess the not expressed thoughts."[1]

The end of the eighteenth century marked a turning point in the relations between Britain and Persia. The political order returned to civil war torn Persia with Qajar Fath Ali's (1772–1834) accession to the throne in 1797. Whereas previous interest in Persia had been purely commercial (represented by the East India Company) the focus now changed to Persia's strategic and political importance for the defence of the crown colony India. Britain, alarmed by the Afghan, Russian and French threats to India, not only sent various missions but also established a permanent diplomatic representation in Persia. In April 1810 Sir Gore Ouseley was appointed the first 'Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary' to the Qajar Court in Tehran, accompanying the Persian envoy Mirza Abul Hassan Shirazi (1776–1845), who had arrived in England in 1809 with Sir Justinian James Morier. On 18th July 1810, they left on the long sea journey to Persia arriving in March 1811.

Studying 'the original works' written by members of the British embassy to Persia in 1810–1812 reveals personal observation, scientific interest as well as their extensive knowledge of their various specialist fields. While undertaking that long and perilous journey, all participants had become

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[1] The German chemist Friedrich August Kekulé von Stradonitz (1829–1896) in a speech on 11th March 1890 in Berlin: "Wer sich zum Forscher ausbilden will, muß die Originalwerke der Reisenden studiren; so gründlich, daß er nicht nur zwischen den Zeilen zu lesen, sondern die selbst da nicht zum Ausdruck gebrachten Gedanken zu errathen vermag." Anschütz, 1929: 945.

travellers whose writings reflect a good deal more than merely diplomatic topics; and their works are good examples of the growing market of travel literature which had become very popular. Despite being travel reports they belong, in various degrees, to the scholarly world whose footprints nowadays researchers follow. The focus of this contribution is therefore on the perception of Sasanian rock reliefs examined by members of the British embassy and how these men transmitted their impressions, ideas and knowledge to illustrate what can be gained by using a kind of 'archaeological-textual analysis'[2]. The members of the mission whose works will be considered are:[3]

- Sir Gore Ouseley (1770–1844), diplomat; appointed as Ambassador-extraordinary
- James Justinian Morier (1780–1849)[4], writer, diplomat and orientalist; Secretary of Embassy
- Sir William Ouseley (1768–1842)[5], orientalist; private secretary to Gore Ouseley
- William Price (1771–1830), orientalist; assistant secretary and interpreter (clerk) to Gore Ouseley
- Sir Robert Gordon (1791–1847), diplomat; accompanied Gore Ouseley as an attaché.

Gore Ouseley's *Diary*[6] covering the years from 1810 to 1815 is an excellent source for his personal point of view and interests, while Morier published his experiences in *A second journey through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor, to Constantinople, between the years 1810 and 1816: With a journal of the voyage by the Brazils and Bombay to the Persian Gulf* (London 1818). As the title indicates, Morier had already written a book about his first journey to this part of the world.[7] Gore Ouseley's

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2 The term 'archaeological-textual analysis' is introduced to underline the special methodical demands concerning the textual analysis of individual observation combined with archaeological evidence.

3 For biographical details, see Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB).

4 Hoffmann, 2007: 133–138, Fig. 49–55.

5 Siberry, 2013: 77–89.

6 Diary of Sir Gore Ouseley, Bodleian Library, Dep.b.250. The Ouseley Trust holds the copyright on Sir Gore Ouseley's Diary.

7 The title of the first travel book is *A Journey through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor, to Constantinople in the years 1808 and 1809* (London 1812). In Morier's letters the

brother William Ouseley is nowadays best known for his three volume work *Travels in Various Countries of the East, More Particulary Persia. Antiquarian Research. History, Geography, Philology and Miscellaneous Literature with extracts from rare and valuable Oriental Manuscripts* (London 1819–1823). In more than 1600 pages he gives a most detailed account of the journey added with numerous footnotes based on his diary, which itself has unfortunately not survived. The last published book on this journey is the *Journal of the British Embassy to Persia; embellished with numerous views taken in India and Persia* (London 1832) by Price. We have no publication by Gordon about his time with the embassy in Persia, but nonetheless his letters[8] and journal[9] give a brilliant insight into the motivation and spirit of his time.

Looking at the professional background of these men, it becomes obvious that at least three of them were orientalists, which is in a way also true for Gore Ouseley. Like his brother William, he owned an excellent collection of oriental manuscripts and had a good knowledge of Persian. Only Gordon started learning Persian during his stay in the country without former knowledge of the language, but nonetheless he was familiar with the culture of these regions, meaning that the whole delegation consisted of well-educated men with a background in Oriental Studies, combined with various other interests. Studying their writings not only individually but comparatively reveals a lot more than might be assumed at first, as will be illustrated on the basis of two selected sites.

The famous city of Bīshāpūr in the province Fārs, Central Iran is particularly famous for its accumulation of rock reliefs attracting even today numerous visitors. Along both sides of the river Shāpūr the Sasanian bas-reliefs have survived, and on 3rd April 1811 these rock reliefs among other monuments were the goal of most members of the embassy, because they were a day trip from Kāzerūn where the camp was situated. To demonstrate the variety of individual perceptions and its expression in the writings, rock relief Bīshāpūr II has been selected as it is mentioned or described by nearly all. The passages are cited in the order of their publication date except Gore Ouseley's unpublished Diary, which follows after his brother's account.

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rock reliefs are not mentioned, see Correspondence of James Justinian Morier, Papers of the Morier Family, Class D, Box 1 Nr. 7 1810–1811.

8 R. Gordon to Lord Aberdeen, British Library, Aberdeen Papers, CLXXI, Add MS 43209.

9 Journal of Sir Robert Gordon, British Library, Stanmore Papers, LXXV, Add MS 49273.

Rock relief Bīshāpūr II[10] is situated on the right bank of the narrow gorge Tang-e Chowgān (Fig. 1), showing Shāpūr I in divine investiture and triumph.[11] James Morier whose book was the first available to an interested readership writes:

> "The heat of the weather was excessive, particularly as I stood under one of the large sculptures with the intention of drawing it, when the reverberation from the rock was too great to be borne. […] I succeeded in making a sketch of the whole sculpture, (of which in my last Journal I had only given one compartment,) including part of the rock on which it is executed. There is something very striking in this mode of making rocks and mountains bear record to the actions of Kings and become as it were the archives of their history."[12]

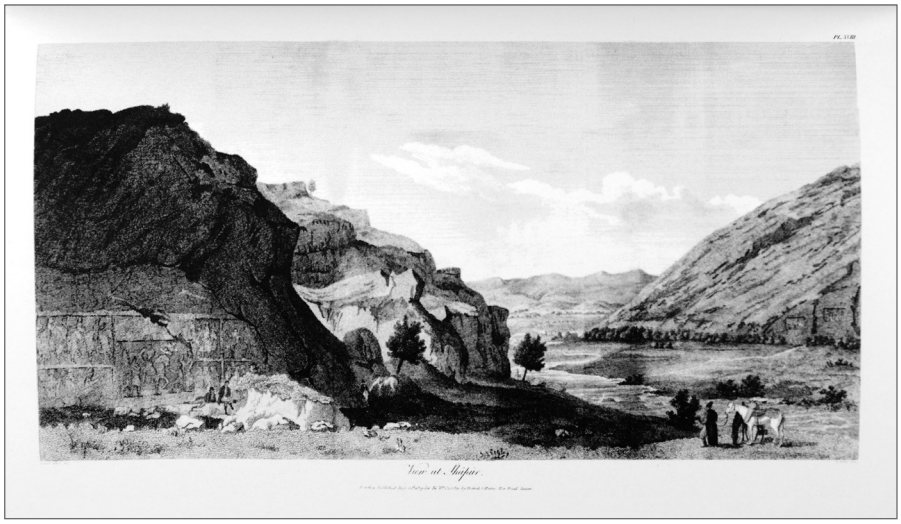

Fig. 1: D'Arcy's drawing of the general view on the valley, Bīshāpūr (Ouseley, 1819: Pl. XVIII)

James Morier's account appears to be rather brief noting mainly the heat and the difficulties the visitors were confronted with, which were also hinted at by William Ouseley. Morier, however, had examined in detail the rock reliefs during his first visit in 1808 publishing the results in his book

[10] See Herrmann, 1983; Vanden Berghe, 1993: 71–88; Canepa, 2013: 856–877.

[11] Canepa, 2013: Table 45.1.

[12] Morier, 1818: 50.

A journey through Persia, Armenia and Asia Minor, thus becoming the first European traveller to give evidence for this site. A closer look reveals further important aspects. During his second visit Morier "succeeded in making a sketch of the whole sculpture" thereby giving us one of the earliest images of the complete rock relief (Fig. 2).[13] Sasanian rock reliefs not only contribute a great deal to our perception of the Sasanian identity of the elite but form a kind of archive of their history and have been a manifold source for researchers.

In contrast to Morier's passage, William Ouseley's description of the rock relief Bīshāpūr II (Fig. 3) is most detailed and reflects his deep interest in as well as his knowledge of the Sasanians:

> "This attribute is found in the next tablet, a fine piece of sculpture, forty one feet long and about twenty feet high; divided into several compartments, and containing so many figures and each figure requiring such minute detail that, having sketched a few, I laid aside my pencil, feeling that kind of despair which arises from the contempation of a task too great to be performed within the time allowed. […]"

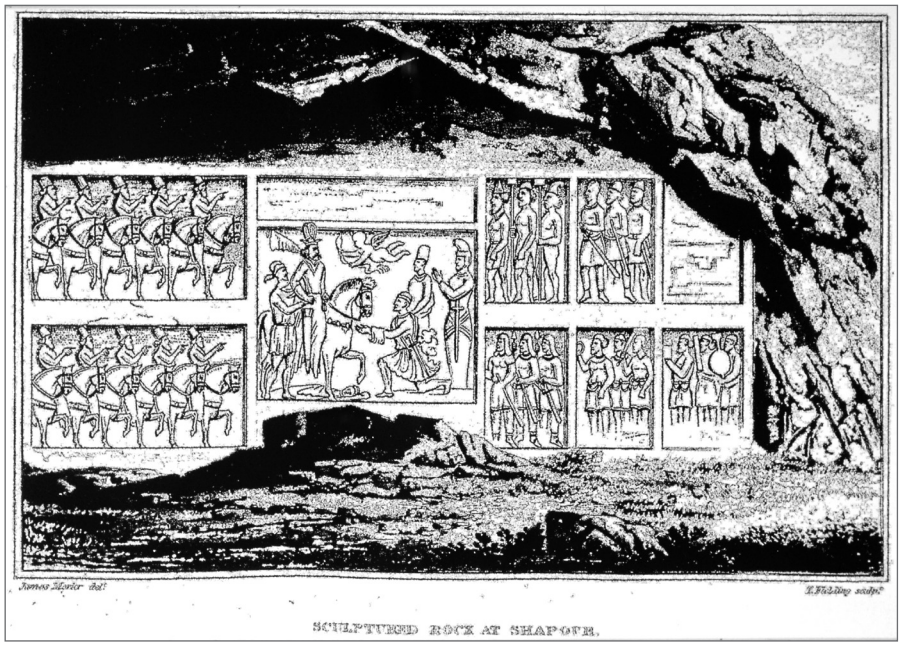

Fig. 2: Morier's drawing of bas-relief II, complete view, Bīshāpūr (Morier, 1818: Pl. II)

[13] Ibid., 1818: Pl. II.

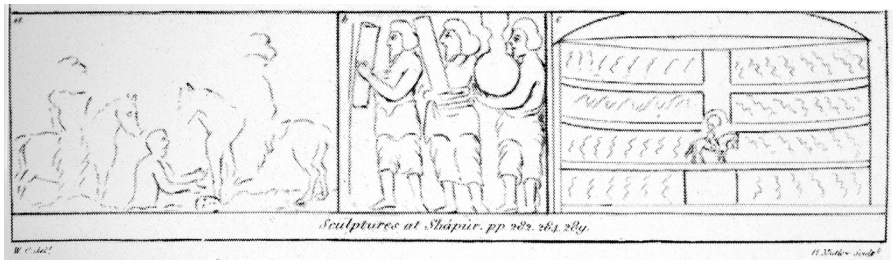

Fig. 3: Ouseley's drawing, details of bas-relief II, Bīshāpūr (Ouseley, 1819: Pl. XVII a, b)

> "SHA´PU´R conspicuous from the globular ornaments above his crown, and mounted on a spirited charger, leads by the right hand one captive Roman, whilst another kneels before him in the attitude of submission. Facing him are several men on foot, of whom some appear to carry standards and trophies; among the figures which I sketched were three, holding certain things that suggested a momentary idea of musical instruments; they are, probably, articles of the Roman spoil, (See Plate XVII. Fig. b). Near the Kings's horse there is a short inscription, of which my copy, from accidental obliteration, retains only those characters represented in the Miscellaneous Plate, (No. 18). […] Behind the king are two ranks of Persian horsemen; a little winged and naked child, resembling our common representation of an angel or a cupid, seems to bear towards him one of those fillets which Eastern princes bound on their foreheads as emblems of royal authority; the ends of a similar fillet wave on the conqueror's shoulders; […] But as the angel is evidently an allegorical personage, (and, not improbably, the work of Grecian or Roman captives); we may, perhaps, suppose an allusion to the victory by which SHA´PU´R had transferred to his own brow, the diadem of a fallen Monarch."[14]

In a full description (Fig. 4), he first gives an approximate size "forty one feet long and about twenty feet high", "divided into several compartments, and containing so many figures", and before he continues describing the central panel, he identifies the king of kings as Shāpūr because of "the globular ornaments above his crown". William Ouseley understands very well the meaning of crowns as medium for identifying the Sasanian king of kings. He proceeds with his description of the central panel with the Roman figures. The Sasanian monarch "leads by the right hand one captive Roman, whilst another kneels before him in the attitude of submission".

[14] Ouseley, 1819: 283–285.

In this case Shāpūr actually holds the wrists instead of leading but the act of submission has correctly been observed. Turning to the right compartments, Ouseley mentions "several men on foot, of whom some appear to carry standards and trophies" while writing further about the third compartment of the lower register, a group of three figures "holding certain things that suggested a momentary idea of musical instruments; they are probably, articles of the Roman spoil". Most of these objects are yet unidentified by modern scholarship, and it is still unknown what these three figures may hold in their hands, except that they seem to bear offerings.[15] Ouseley offers a singular piece of information with his remark that "near the Kings's horse there is a short inscription". He is the only one who mentions this inscription and publishes at least the surviving part of his copied version of the inscription.[16] For many years he had intensely studied the inscriptions on coins resulting in a book with the title *Observations on some medals and gems, bearing inscriptions in the Pahlavi or ancient Persick charakter* (London 1801), and he had therefore developed a particular eye for these inscriptions. The left compartment is described as "behind the king are two ranks of Persian horsemen". Then he draws his attention back to the central panel with the words "a

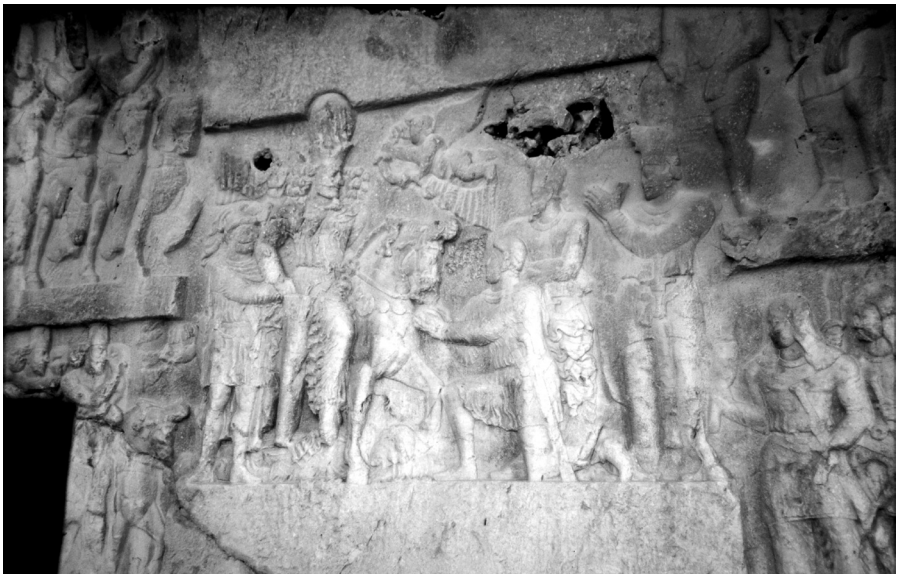

Fig. 4: Bas-relief II, Bīshāpūr (photo by author 2002)

[15] Canepa, 2009: 72–73.

[16] Ouseley, 1819: Pl. XXIII, No. 18.

little winged and naked child, resembling our common representation of an angel or a cupid, seems to bear towards him one of those fillets" and then proceeds to offer an interpretation of what this winged figure might bear: a fillet "which Eastern princes bound on their foreheads as emblems of royal authority". Ouseley concludes by suggesting "but as the angel is evidently an allegorical personage, (and, not improbably, the work of Grecian or Roman captives); we may, perhaps, suppose an allusion to the victory by which SHA´PU´R had transferred to his own brow, the diadem of a fallen Monarch". In recent scholarship this figure is seen as a kind of allegorical figure but in a different sense. Thus, Canepa, in his book *The Two Eyes of the Earth*, comments on this figure that it "acts as a type of divine agent, bearing the sovereign a token of celestial approbation, in a sort of reenactment of Shāpūr I's divine investiture as shown in Bīshāpūr I and Naqsh-e Rajāb."[17] Then William Ouseley concludes that "the diadem of a fallen Monarch" must be an allusion to the Roman emperor Valerian and his conqueror, the king of kings Shāpūr I, on the basis of the historical sources. At great length he discusses all kinds of sources – in particular Persian written ones – not only giving comprehensive footnotes but also critical annotations and bibliographic information before he carries on with the next descriptive passage on a rock relief. This procedure of quoting from numerous sources and authorities is characteristic for William Ouseley's way of writing and reflects very well his profound and enthusiastic passion for his subject.

A very fine example of private observation is the *Diary* by William Ouseley's younger brother Gore Ouseley, the Ambassador-extraordinary. This diary provides invaluable insights into personal matters combined with the historical context. He notes about the rock relief Bīshāpūr II:

> "About 200 yards further on, is a second bass relief of King Shapur on Horseback sending a man on foot, seemingly a prisoner, tramping on another dead & ruining [?] the submission of Valerian who [bends?] the knee before him– There are presentations of the soldiers of different countries in the respective compartments of the sculpture & the Costume of the Roman [?] soldiers is accordingly with represented [?]– The stone appears to be a very hard yellowish granite, which in many plans is highly polished"[18]

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[17] Canepa, 2009: 75.

[18] Bodleian Library, Dep.b.250: fol. 71. I am most grateful to Martin William of The Ouseley Trust for the permission of quoting from the Diary.

In a very brief manner he states what he has seen, correctly identifying the figure of Shāpūr I but being misled by assuming that the kneeling figure is the Roman Emperor Valerian. What Gore Ouseley identifies as "soldiers of different countries" are the two groups of horsemen to the left and the five groups to the right of the central scene, while the "Costume" of the Roman soldiers alludes to the kneeling Philip the Arab, Gordian beneath the horse's hooves and Valerian. Besides, he observes that the stone itself "appears to be very hard yellowish granite" and "highly polished". Apart from Gore Ouseley, only Morier had remarked on the rock itself: "The whole of this most interesting monument is sculptured on a very hard rock, which bears the finest polish, and which we pronounced to be a coarse species of jasper"[19]. Interestingly enough even nowadays one can hardly find information on the type of rock that the reliefs were worked into. The region belongs to the Southern Zagros, and its typical rock is limestone and dolomite indicating the type of rock of the bas-reliefs, most likely limestone. The rock is surely neither granite nor jasper but is indeed of yellowish colour, hard and polished. Nonetheless, Gore Ouseley's observation on the type of rock alludes to his keen interest in geology, which led him to collect and describe geological material in numerous entries in his diary.

The last one who published his experiences on the journey was William Price in 1832. To compare his above-mentioned *Journal of the British Embassy to Persia (...)* with the unpublished material offers an amazing opportunity, as will be shown later on. In his book we read about Bīshāpūr the following passage:

> "Passing through Direes, the first object was a ruined castle, called the Daughter, situated at the pass of the mountains, and at a turn a little beyond was a sculptured gateway, commemorating the victories of Shapoor over the Greeks or Romans: sculptures also appeared on several rocks."[20]

It is undoubtedly the shortest comment on the Sasanian rock reliefs, when compared to the other texts. The surprise is to be found in a manuscript account of the journey by Price because here he gives a much fuller report on the trip to Bīshāpūr than in the published work.[21] Concerning the rock reliefs he generally states that on both sides of the river rock reliefs are

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[19] Morier, 1812: 88.

[20] Price, 1832: 9.

[21] Journal, British Library, William Price Papers, Mss Eur E332: fols. 18–19 as well as Add MS 19270.

worked out in a similar style. Besides, he notes that at least two reliefs relate to the reign of Shāpūr and he thinks that some groups of figures represent processions.

Considering that in the beginning of the 19th century we are still at an early stage of recognising Sasanian art, these passages show a remarkable understanding of the Sasanian rock reliefs on the part of the travellers despite their errors.

This is also true for the site Sorsoreh at Ray near Tehran where there once existed a now destroyed Sasanian rock relief. It is therefore a very lucky circumstance that descriptions and drawings of this rock relief were not only made in former times but are also still available today. Again, Morier will have the first word (Fig. 5):

> "In fact Mr. Gordon discovered a rude sculpture of the Shapourian age […]. This sculpture is to be seen on the south side of the ruined castle on the height, (the farthest side from Teheran,) and is executed upon a surface of rock, which has been smoothed for the purpose. It represents a warrior on horseback at full speed, with his lance couched, having a globe on his head and a ball on each shoulder. The performance is rude and imperfect, and the subject not complete, as the outlines of another figure are to be traced on the same rock."[22]

Before analysing the rock relief further, two other reports are introduced to give an overall picture. Not surprisingly William Ouseley's text is the most detailed one (Fig. 6):

> "[…] one object only, among all that I examined, can with certainty be pronounced a work of art more ancient than the Muhammedan era.
>
> This is a sculptured tablet, which, until discovered by Mr. Gordon, no European traveller seems to have observed. It is carved in the usual manner of the *Sassanian* ages, on a face of the natural rock or mountain imperfectly squared and smoothed for the purpose; its situation among the ruined walls of the old castle will appear from the first sketch (pl. LXV); and in the second I have delineated its sculpture more particularly from a near inspection, having ascended to it by a fissure of the hill on the right side. It represents an equestrian figure, which from the strong resemblance to heads on medals, and other likenesses of SHA´PU´R, especially those at the place bearing his name, I do not hesitate to declare a memorial of that vain monarch. [Footnote 32: "He appears of the human size; advancing

[22] Morier, 1812: 190–191.

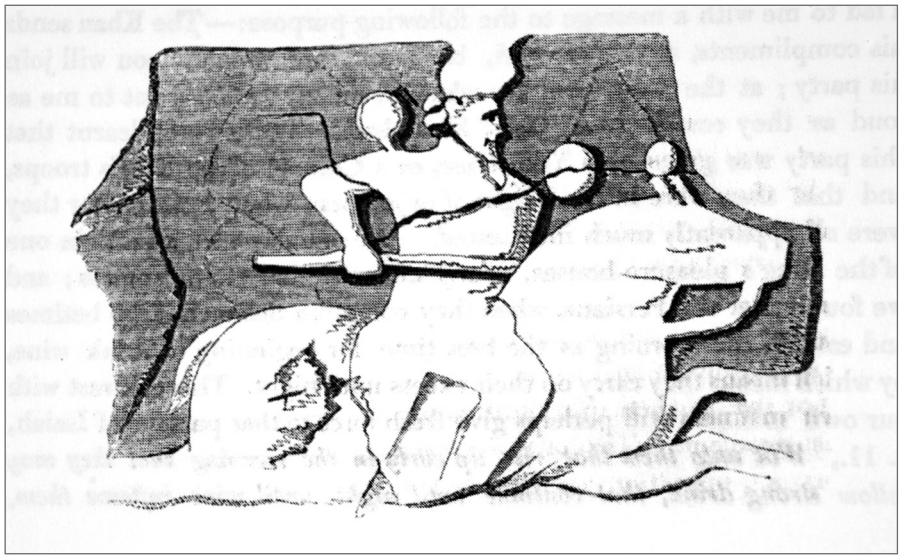

Fig. 5: Morier's drawing of the bas-relief at Sorsoreh (Morier, 1818: 190)

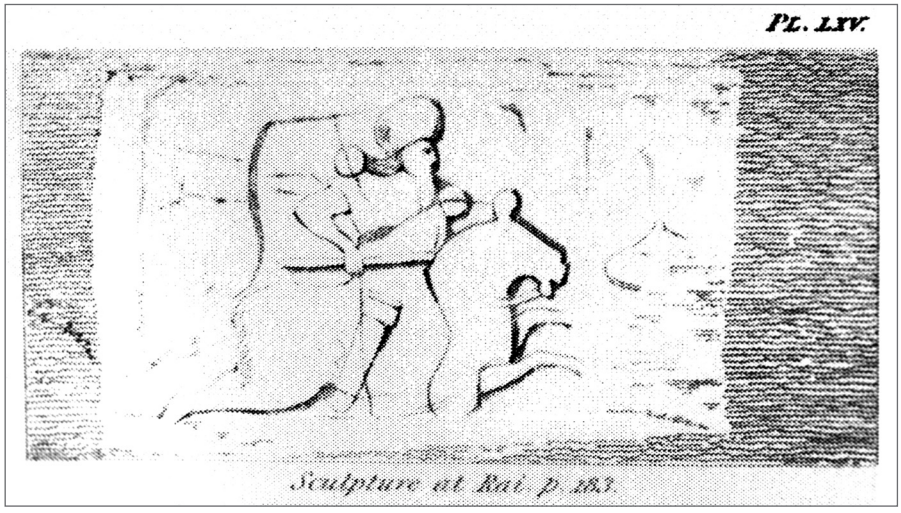

Fig. 6: Ouseley's drawing of the bas-relief at Sorsoreh (Ouseley, 1823: Pl. LXV)

at full gallop to close combat; armed with a spear of which, according to relative proportion, the shaft nearly equals his wrist in thickness; a quiver hangs by his right thigh; the globular ornament of SHA´PU´R'S crown, so conspicuous on his medals and on the other monuments, is here also visible. But the whole sculpture, though not deficient in spirit of design, is indistinct; and to me seemed rather an unfinished work, than one that had

> been defaced either by violence of man, or the gradual decomposition of the stone. The artist perhaps abandoned his undertaking, having found the rock not favourable to more minute execution. Of the antagonist, whom it was most probably intended that should transfix with his lance, the form does not appear to have been ever traced; and of his horse, the head only can be discerned, in faint relief. Over the tablet which contains the Persian monarch's figure is a square of smaller dimensions (see pl. LXV) and seemingly adapted for an inscription; but I could not perceive on it the vestiges of any letters. My sketch comprehends, what indeed was scarcely worth delineation, the second horse's head; it would otherwise have been rendered superfluous by Mr. Moriers's excellent drawing of SHA´PU´R'S figure, (Trav. Vol.II.p.190). This sculpture is at the distance of about five miles nearly S.S.E. from *Tehrán*."][23]

On first view, the briefer passage by William Price might appear of little interest but this is misleading (Fig. 7):

> "A short distance from this place [octagon tower of Shari-bano] is some sculpture on a rock – there are two tablets one above the other: the upper one has nothing sculptured on it, but appears to have been a ground for some intended figure. The lower tablet has a finely drawn figure of Shapoor, on horseback, sword in hand, in the act of attacking another figure intended to have been carved – the horse's head only is roughed out. It is probable there have been other sculptures in the vicinity, for one day I found the foot of some animal in bas-relief on a piece of rock stone; it was half buried in the side of a tumulus, and might have been lying there many centuries."[24]

Due to their descriptions and drawings, we are able to reconstruct the destroyed rock relief in some detail. The panel was carved into polished rock and shows an equestrian figure holding a "lance" as Morier (and William Ouseley) write(s). Price's "sword" seems less likely compared with similar known scenes, while William Ouseley also mentions "a quiver (that) hangs by his right thigh". The horse is galloping "at full speed" seemingly confronting another figure on horseback, as Morier observes "the outlines of another figure" and Price reports "the horse's head only is roughed out" while concluding the equestrian figure is "in the act of attacking another figure intended to have been carved". William Ouseley gives his opinion that "of the antagonist, whom it was most probably

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[23] Ouseley, 1823: 182.

[24] Price, 1832: 37.

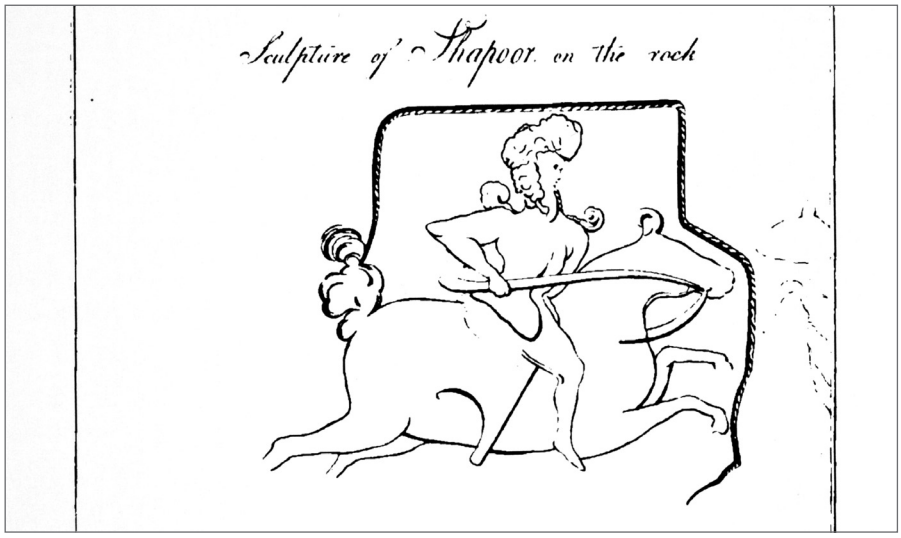

Fig. 7: Price's drawing of the bas-relief at Sorsoreh (Price, 1832: Pl. XVI)

intended that should transfix with his lance, the form does not appear to have been ever traced; and of his horse, the head only can be discerned, in faint relief". While Morier describes the visible figure "having a globe on his head and a ball on each shoulder", William Ouseley "from the strong resemblance to the heads on medals, and other likenesses of SHA´PU´R" and "the globular ornament of SHA´PU´R's crown, so conspicuous on his medals and on the other monuments, is here also, visible" twice comes to the conclusion that the equestrian figure represents the Sasanian king of kings Shāpūr. Besides, William Ouseley writes that "over the tablet which contains the Persian monarch's figure is a square of smaller dimensions and seemingly adapted for an inscription; but I could not perceive on it the vestiges of any letters", and Price mentions "two tablets one above the other: the upper one has nothing sculptured on it, but appears to have been a ground for some intended figure". Morier and Price indicate that the rock relief is incomplete, but William Ouseley gives his thoughts on the subject most fully:

> "But the whole sculpture, though not deficient in spirit of design, is indistinct; and to me seemed rather an unfinished work, than one that had been defaced either by violence of man, or the gradual decomposition of the stone. The artist perhaps abandoned his undertaking, having found the rock not favourable to more minute execution."

Apart from the written descriptions, we have several sketches of the rock relief at Sorsoreh near Ray drawn by different people; in the case of James Morier even three versions have survived[25] – a most lucky coincidence as the rock relief has been destroyed for a long time. We do know at least that Robert Gordon had discovered this so far unknown rock relief, which shows a Sasanian King armed on horseback in a way known from similar scenes.[26] All three travellers identify the equestrian figure as Shāpūr I. Canepa thinks that the topic belongs to the type of "equestrian battle, since Sasanian Kings of Kings do not appear anywhere else hunting in armor".[27] He, however, supposes that the figure represented Shāpūr II in equestrian triumph but does not give any reason for his suggestion.[28]

What might we nowadays gain by studying these antiquarian works? Is it true that modern researchers should still deal with these writings? Before introducing some final thoughts to these questions, I would like to cite Canepa on this aspect:

> "In this regard, the scholarship of Sasanian rock reliefs owes a debt to the documentation of early explorers, diplomats, and entrepreneurs. The drawings of Sir Ker Porter (1777–1842) and Sir William Ouseley (1767–1842), in particular, preserve a record of a number of reliefs that were subsequently damaged or totally destroyed before more systematic photographic documentation in the twentieth century."[29]

For my part, I even would go a step further: not only because of their drawings scholarship owes a debt 'to the (…) early explorers, diplomats, and entrepreneurs', but for their general legacy including their textual descriptions. Reading each introduced book for itself offers an amazing

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[25] JJM's Persian sketchbook, Papers of the Morier Family, Class N: Manuscript Volumes, N2.6 fol. 138: Two drawings: One on grey paper, the figure drawn in white; the other black drawn on a former white paper. Both are very similar on first sight, but each offers informative details which was Morier's intention by using different paper and colours. For the digitalisation of the drawings by Balliol College Archives & Manuscripts see https://www.flickr.com/photos/balliolarchivist/8102850775/in/set-72157631784894032. Besides, we have the published drawing of his book.

[26] In his letters of 1811 Gordon does not mention anything about Sasanian rock reliefs. However, it seems likely that in his journal entries on this topic might be found. Unfortunately, its consultation had to be postponed to a future visit.

[27] Canepa, 2013: 868.

[28] Ibid., 2013: Tab. 45.1.

[29] Ibid., 2013: 861–862.

richness of information. Comparing them, gives us, on one hand, not only their individual personal view of Persia and its people in words and in pictures, but also valuable notes and drawings of antiquities, cities, landscapes, manners and so on. Thus they allow us invaluable insights into the past and the traveller's contemporary Persia, providing material for different subject areas of Oriental Studies: linguistics, philology, science, political and social history. Moreover, these travel books offer for other disciplines such as archaeology and history important information on their research fields, as well as the History of Science.

On the other hand, each piece of individual observation contributes to an overall picture of the subject itself, in this case Sasanian rock reliefs. Of course, the question may be raised as to how much do these writings and their contained information reflect the actual state of the things observed – no doubt they contain a mixture of correct observations, misunderstandings and misleading conclusions. The comparative reading and the 'archaeological-textual analysis' might help to decide on the type of the given information. Each of these men had an individual approach to the topic depending on his personal background and interest: Morier's *Second Journey* may have a more 'popular style' emphasising the exotic aspect; yet remarks like "There is something very striking in this mode of making rocks and mountains bear record to the actions of Kings, and become as it were the archives of their history"[30] prove his integrity to a scholarly approach in a book characterised as travel report. In contrast, William Ouseley's books of travel are hardly typical for this genre, a fact that is already indicated by its subtitle *Antiquarian Research. History, Geography, Philology and Miscellaneous Literature with extracts from rare and valuable Oriental Manuscripts*. In fact, his books belong by their nature to the scholarly world embodied in his life-long preoccupation with Oriental Studies. The *Diary* of Gore Ouseley is, of course, a very personal and fascinating document as it never was meant to be published. It therefore reveals his private thoughts and observations uncensored. Price's published *Journal* is characterised by mostly short entries combined with quotations by various authors. In his case it is most interesting that his unpublished manuscripts document a much more detailed text – one would surely expect it the other way round.

[30] Morier, 1818: 51.

Although my contribution can just give a glimpse on the rich and various pieces of information contained in the introduced works, comparative reading proves also that the authors not just copied their texts from one another – as such literature is often accused of – but indeed wrote down their own impressions besides knowing, of course, the works of the fellow travellers. The observations passed on by these travellers give us invaluable information about the appearance of the Sasanian rock reliefs in those days and enable us to compare it to the actual state. From reading these texts we realise our own achievements but also yet unsolved questions, for example concerning the question connected with rock relief Bīshāpūr II: What are the three figures of the compartment actually holding in their hands? Most of the above-given accounts not only contain descriptions of the visual appearance of the rock reliefs but also manifold information about their location, their patron as well as hints leading to their interpretation.

Therefore, the careful examination of the 'original works by the travellers' not only proves to be in many respects an enrichment of modern research but also turns out to be an important link for the transfer of information especially in this day and age. This has even more truth as, sadly enough, the political situation and wilful destruction of heritage sites in some countries considerably hinder present research or even make it impossible in some cases.

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The Arsacids of Rome and Parthia's "Iranian Revival" in the First Century CE

Jake Nabel

By all accounts, the first century CE in Parthian history was a time of renewed engagement with the empire's Iranian heritage.[1] Scholars have ascribed particular importance to the reigns of Artabanus II (c. 10–38 CE) and Vologaeses I (c. 51–79 CE), two trailblazing rulers who rearticulated Arsacid power in increasingly Iranian terms.[2] The evidence, meager though it often is, does suggest a shift. The Parthian language appears for the first time on Arsacid coinage as the Greek legends begin to degenerate.[3] A major step in the collection and preservation of Zoroastrianism's central texts is taken by one Walaxš ī Aškānān, who is possibly to be identified with Vologaeses I.[4] Roman literary texts imagine a connection between the Arsacid dynasty and the ancient Achaemenids.[5] Scholars

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1 The changes of the first century CE are highlighted in several reference works and surveys of (ancient) Iranian history (Wiesehöfer, 1993: 185; Frye, 1993: 211; Axworthy, 2008: 40; Fowler, 2012: 4; Dąbrowa, 2012: 174–175) as well as in more detailed studies of the Arsacid kingdom (Debevoise, 1938: 196; Neusner, 1963; Wiesehöfer, 2015: 339; Schottky, 1991; Olbrycht, 1998b: 173–179; Kennedy, 1996: 88).

2 Artabanus II: Frye, 1984: 237; Dąbrowa, 1983: 73–92, esp. 86; Kahrstedt, 1950: 11; but cf. Curtis, 2007: 16, who sees Artabanus' initiative as a continuation of earlier developments. It is now generally accepted that this king was the second and not the third Artabanus: see Fowler, 2005: 125 n.1. Vologaeses I: Bivar, 1983: 85–86; Wiesehöfer, 2005: 133; Colledge, 1967: 51; Olbrycht, 1998a: 125–138.

3 Sinisi, 2012a: 19; 2014: 23–24; Curtis, 2000: 27; Lukonin, 1983: 684–685. See further below, n.48–50.

4 Dk. 412.5–11; cf. ZVYt. 3.26; see below.

5 Neusner, 1963: 48; Wolski, 1966. On the question of an "Achaemenid program" under the Arsacids see further Shayegan, 2011: 39–331; and below.

speak of an Arsacid "neo-Iranism" or "Iranian revival," and sometimes of a severing of Parthia's links to its Hellenistic past.[6]

As usual with Parthian history, it would be unwise to attach mountains of significance to our molehills of evidence. The changes in the coin iconography are gradual, not abrupt. The Zoroastrian texts offer little chronological precision. And the only explicit Arsacid appeals to Achaemenid heritage come from Greco-Roman authors who had their own reasons for connecting the Parthians to the bygone empire of Darius and Xerxes.[7] Still, while parts of this narrative structure may buckle under the weight of further research or new evidence, on the whole, the edifice is likely to stand. The available evidence suggests that, in first century CE Parthia, change mattered more than continuity.

Why did the first century in particular usher in a new phase of Arsacid engagement with the political and religious traditions of ancient Iran? In this paper I suggest one possible answer that has not yet received the attention it deserves. I argue that Parthia's Iranian revival during the first century CE took place partly as a reaction against the Arsacid "hostages" of the Roman empire and their influence on Parthian political history.[8] Throughout the Julio-Claudian period, several of these dynasts returned to the Parthian kingdom from Rome to claim the Arsacid throne. Their bids for kingship were, on the whole, unsuccessful. But their repatriation to Parthia may nonetheless have prompted their victorious enemies to articulate Arsacid power in new ways. In order to delegitimize the members of the Arsacid family who had lived in Rome, the Parthians developed a conception of Arsacid kingship that was rooted in their empire's Iranian past. Parthia's rebirth as an Iranian power was therefore partly a result of interaction with Rome through the trans-imperial circulation of Arsacid royalty.

Preliminarily it should be emphasized that, aside from a few coins, the evidence for the lives of the Arsacids of Rome comes from the literary productions of authors who lived in the Roman empire.[9] While the interest of these authors in Rome's Arsacid residents means that information about

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6 Neo-Iranism: Wolski, 1993: 151. Iranian revival: Herrmann, 1977; Curtis, 2007. Recession of Greek influence: Sinisi, 2012a: 19–20; Debevoise, 1938: 196.

7 Cf. Luther, 2014: 158–159.

8 For the background on these figures, see Dąbrowa, 1987; Wiesehöfer, 2010; Nedergaard, 1988; Strothmann, 2012; Gregoratti, 2015; Nabel, 2017a; 2017b.

9 The issues of Vonones I have been identifed: Sellwood 60/1–9. Coins for the other Arsacids of Rome are not known.

them is relatively abundant, these figures were, in a sense, canvases onto which the Romans could project their preformed conceptions of what Parthians were like – by turns submissive, barbarous, exotic, and deadly.[10] For Tacitus, whose testimony is indispensable, their stories were also occasions to highlight the insidious influence of the emperor's court and the pitfalls of Roman imperialism.[11] Caution is therefore necessary. What the Greco-Roman authors present as Arsacid political discourse is to a considerable extent the Roman imagination let loose within the Parthian empire – or, in the case of Tacitus, a Roman's critique of Rome through a Parthian mouthpiece of the author's own invention.

The use of the term "hostage" to describe the Arsacids of Rome is likewise no neutral designation, and it must be used advisedly. The category is a slippery one even in the Greco-Roman literary sources, as a number of thematic studies of hostages in the Roman world have shown.[12] While Greek and Roman authors are generally consistent in referring to the Arsacids of Rome as hostages, they also assert that the Parthian kings used hostage submission as a pretext for their own purposes, subverting Roman expectations of how the practice worked.[13] The Parthian conception of hostageship is unclear, as no evidence directly addresses how the Arsacids understood these transactions.[14] The Parthian word for hostage (*nyp'k* / *nēpāk*) survives in a Sasanian inscription from the third century CE, but it is unknown whether the Arsacids applied this term to the members of their family who were sent to Rome.[15]

With these caveats out of the way: what do the Arsacids of Rome have to add to our understanding of the "Iranian revival" during the first century CE?

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[10] Lerouge, 2007: 110–119; Schneider, 1986: 67; 1998: 110–113. For the literary conventions surrounding hostages in Greek and Roman historiography, see Allen, 2006; Braund, 1984: 9–17.

[11] See Syme, 1958: 528–533; Adler, 2011: 119–139; Ehrhardt, 1998.

[12] Thematic studies of Roman hostage-taking: Walker, 1980; Aymard, 1961; Elbern, 1990; Allen, 2006.

[13] The designation is usually *obses* in Latin and ὅμηρος in Greek, but cf. *pignus* in *Mon. Anc*. 32.2. Arsacid kings use hostage submission as pretext: Strab. 16.1.28; Joseph. *AJ* 18.41–42; Tac. *Ann*. 2.1.2, 13.9.1.

[14] On the basis of Near Eastern and especially Sasanian evidence, I have argued elsewhere that the Parthians would have understood these transactions more as a matter of political fosterage than hostageship; see Nabel, 2017a: 46–65.

[15] NPi 94; Skjærvø, 1983: 73, 114; see also Durkin-Meisterernst, 1998: 239 for MMP-Pa.

With the possible exception of two ambiguous cases from the reign of Trajan, the known transfers of Arsacids to Rome took place during the reign of the Julio-Claudians, a period that saw an ideological shift in how the Romans looked at the empire of their Parthian neighbors to the east.[16] Territorial expansion was deeply embedded in the habits of the Roman Republic.[17] Augustus did not depart from this pattern, and the idea of *imperium sine fine* was vital to the vision of imperial order that he propagated.[18] But his inability or disinterest in mounting a campaign of conquest against Parthia led to the formulation of a new ideology that supported a new kind of policy toward the Arsacid kingdom. This development is well captured in the phrase *divisio orbis*, a description of the Roman-Parthian relationship in Justin (perhaps echoing Trogus, the Augustan author he epitomized).[19] This new way of thinking about the east envisioned Parthia as an *alter orbis*, "another world" – barbarous, decadent, and better kept at bay by Roman power rather than ruled directly.[20]

Crucial to the implementation of this ideology was the use of a historical analogy. The Romans imagined the Parthians as the successors of the ancient Persian empire of the Achaemenids. By extension, they themselves identified with the classical Greeks.[21] During the Greco-Persian wars of the fifth century BCE, these Greeks had (at least in the telling of Herodotus) heroically upheld the proper division of the world by fending off the despotic forces of the east. As heir to the legacy of the classical Greeks, Augustan Rome would keep the Parthians – the successors of the Achaemenids – confined to their own world, the dangerous and backward territory to the east of the Euphrates.

Augustus propagated this ideology through events like his famous *naumachia* of the year 2 BCE, which pitted "Athenians" against "Persians,"

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[16] For a tabulation of known cases (including two ambiguous transactions during the reign of Trajan), see Nabel, 2017b: 28 (Table 2.3).

[17] See esp. Harris, 1979: 105–130. For an overview of approaches to Republican imperialism, see Eckstein, 2006.

[18] Brunt, 1963: 171–176; Mattern, 1999: 162–188.

[19] Just. 41.1.1; cf. the *orbis alter* of Manil. 4.674–5; Tac. *Ann*. 2.2.2 (on which see further below). Some (Sonnabend, 1986: 202; Lerouge, 2007: 175) think the phrase belonged to Trogus' original text, but see also Yardley / Heckl, 1997: 11.

[20] Sonnabend, 1986: 197–227; Schneider, 2007: 54–60; Shayegan, 2011: 332–340.

[21] Spawforth, 1994; Hardie, 1997; Luther, 2010; Schneider, 2012: 119.

"with the Athenians winning, just as they did then."[22] Augustus had recreated the battle of Salamis, where the Athenian-led Greek fleet defeated the Persian navy and repudiated Xerxes' hubristic yoking of east and west together at the Hellespont. By publicly celebrating this victory and appropriating its significance for his own purposes, Augustus shaped the way his Roman subjects thought about the relationship of their own empire to the Arsacid kingdom.[23] The Persian Wars tradition would continue under later Julio-Claudians, most notably at Caligula's Baiae procession and a subsequent Salaminian *naumachia* under Nero.[24]

The Arsacids living in the city at this time proved useful to the implementation of the ideology of the *divisio orbis*. Suetonius records that Augustus exhibited his Arsacid "hostages" to the Romans at one of his festivals, leading them through the middle of the arena and seating them directly behind him in the second row.[25] The author mentions the Parthians in the same breath as other outlandish curiosities that Augustus put on display for the Roman people: a two foot tall dwarf with a stentorian voice; a group of tigers; a giant snake. The sheer foreignness and novelty of these figures would have reinforced the notion that these creatures were the inhabitants of an *alter orbis*: they represented a different kind of empire that belonged to a different kind of world.[26]

But the Arsacids of the Julio-Claudian court effected change in Parthia no less than in Rome. In several cases, members of the Parthian nobility petitioned the Roman emperor to release one of these princes so that he could come back to the Arsacid kingdom to serve as their king.[27] The sources record several such requests, which in every case were granted.[28]

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[22] Cass. Dio 55.10.7–8: καὶ ἐνίκων καὶ τότε οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι; cf. Ov. *Ars am*. 1.171–2 with Hollis, 1977: 77–78.

[23] See Shayegan, 2011: 337–339.

[24] See Spawforth, 1994: 238; Hardie, 1997. Caligula's Baiae procession: Sen. *De Brev. Vit*. 18.5; Suet. *Calig*. 19; Cass. Dio 59.17; Joseph. *AJ* 19.5–6; [Aurelius Victor] *Epitome* 3.9. Nero's *naumachia*: Cass. Dio 61.9.6; Suet. *Ner*. 12.

[25] Suet. *Aug*. 43.3–4; cf. Rose, 2005: 37.

[26] Wiesehöfer, 2010: 188. Note also Caligula's use of Darius at the Baiae procession; above, n.24.

[27] On the Parthian nobility's relationship with the Arsacid king, see Wolski, 1989; Hauser, 2005: 185–199.

[28] The young son of Phraates IV (returned by Augustus to his father in perhaps 23 BCE) is an exceptional case in that the king, not the nobility, requested his return; for discussion, see Nabel, 2015: 307–314. For Vonones, see *Mon. Anc*. 33; Joseph. *AJ* 18.46; Tac.

A number of Arsacids who had spent years or even decades at Rome therefore returned to Parthia and abruptly changed from the prisoners of one empire into the rulers of another. What impact did they have on Parthia? What forces did their repatriation unleash?

The answer begins with political conditions within the Parthian empire. Every Arsacid who exchanged Roman "hostageship" for Parthian kingship was compelled to fight a civil war for the throne. No reigning Arsacid king ever gave up power willingly, and certain members of the Parthian nobility also seem to have arrayed themselves against the royal contenders returning from Rome. These domestic conflicts meant that the Arsacids of Rome had powerful enemies within Parthia. These enemies didn't just fight them on the battlefield. They fought them with rhetoric, they fought them with invective, and they fought them with a new vision of Arsacid kingship that was designed to delegitimize the Arsacids of Rome and to disqualify them from taking the throne.

The reconstruction of this rhetoric is a hazardous business, since almost all the evidence comes from Tacitus.[29] As mentioned earlier, this situation poses a serious problem. Tacitus was imperfectly informed about political discourse within the Parthian empire, and his digressions on the fate of the Arsacids of Rome may have aimed at holding up a mirror for the Romans rather than opening a window onto the Parthians.[30] But without Tacitus, there is little basis for assessing the significance of their homecoming. Setting aside for the moment the historicity of his narrative, how does he depict the return of Rome's Arsacid princes to their native land?

There are three such figures in the *Annals* who return to Parthia to contend for the Arsacid kingship: Vonones (8/9 CE); Tiridates (35/6 CE); and Meherdates (49 CE).[31] In every case, Tacitus writes from the point of view of the opponents of these repatriated princes. Each time, their enemies rehearse different variations of a similar argument:

Ann. 2.2.1. Phraates: Tac. *Ann*. 6.31.2; Cass. Dio 58.26.2. Tiridates: Tac. *Ann*. 6.32.2–3; Cass. Dio 58.26.2. Meherdates: Tac. *Ann*. 11.10.4, 12.10–11.

[29] The exception is the return of Vonones, for which Josephus (*AJ* 18.46–52), the *Res Gestae* of Augustus (*Mon. Anc*. 33), and the numismatic evidence offer additional testimony.

[30] On the literary aspects of Tacitus' Parthian digressions, see Keitel, 1978; Martin, 1981: 179–180; Gowing, 1990; Malloch, 2013: 114–175; Clark, 2011.

[31] For sources, see above, n.28. One Arsacid, Phraates, died in Syria on the way back to Parthia; see further below, n.35.

- a *true* Arsacid is the opposite of a Roman;
- the former "hostage" now vying for the throne has lived at Rome for so long that he has become Roman and, by extension, a tool of Roman power;
- therefore he has lost his Arsacid legitimacy and is ineligible for the kingship.

The last case, that of Meherdates in 49 CE, is perhaps the clearest formulation of this argument. Meherdates fights a war against Gotarzes, the reigning Parthian king. He loses. Gotarzes has his defeated enemy brought before him, and Tacitus writes a reproach from the king's point of view. "Gotarzes," the author says, "upbraiding [Meherdates] as no relative of his nor a man of the Arsacid clan but instead a foreigner and a Roman, commanded that he live with his ears cut off as a sign of his own clemency and as an insult to us."[32]

The accusations draw on potent political rhetoric. Although Meherdates was by blood uncontestably a member of the Arsacid family, Gotarzes rejects his Arsacid heritage. Instead of an Arsacid, he is called a foreigner – a man who does not belong in the Parthian empire – and a Roman. These two terms – "Arsacid" on the one hand, and "Roman" on the other – are presented in Gotarzes' speech as incompatible and irreconcilable opposites.

Tacitus' Gotarzes closely echoes the idea from Augustan ideology that Parthia was a world apart from Rome. In Tacitus' characterization, the *divisio orbis* underpins Parthian thinking about Rome just as it does Roman thinking about Parthia. This view is equally present when the historian writes of Vonones' return to Parthia in 8 CE. Vonones' opponents complain that "a king had been sought from another world."[33] Josephus describes Vonones' return to Parthia as well; like Tacitus, he considers the viewpoint of Vonones' political enemies. The story in his account is much the same: Vonones' residence at Rome has allegedly made him a "foreign slave" – a foreigner being the opposite of Arsacid, and a slave being the opposite of a king.[34]

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[32] Tac. *Ann*. 12.14.3: *atque ille non propinquum neque Arsacis de gente, sed alienigenam et Romanum increpans, auribus decisis vivere iubet, ostentui clementiae suae et in nos dehonestamento*.

[33] Tac. *Ann*. 2.2.2–4: *petitum alio ex orbe regem*.

[34] Joseph. *AJ* 18.47: ἀνδραπόδῳ γὰρ ἀλλοτρίῳ. For a comparison of Josephus and Tacitus' accounts of this episode, see Kahrstedt, 1950: 11–12; Gowing, 1990: 316–320.

But this way of thinking is found only among the enemies of the Arsacids of Rome. Tacitus himself does not say that these princes had "sunk down into a slave-like subjection," as he does when speaking of the Cappadocian hostage Tigranes.[35] Instead, this invective is ascribed to their Parthian political rivals. These foes seize upon the ideology of the *divisio orbis* because it gives them a way to delegitimize and discredit their opponents. First, they characterize the Arsacid as the opposite of the Roman; second, they claim that the former "hostages" have been at Rome for so long that they have become creatures of the Romans. This logic effectively disqualifies the Arsacids of Rome from contention for the kingship of Parthia. In other words, Tacitus shows the enemies of Vonones, Tiridates, and Meherdates adopting the ideology of the *divisio orbis* because it gives them a way to justify the configuration of power that they want – namely, the rejection of the Arsacids of Rome as potential kings.

But is Tacitus a reliable source for Parthian political discourse? Isn't he merely using the Parthians to voice his own critique of Roman decadence? Aren't his Arsacid narratives merely occasions to remark on how Roman culture corrupts the hapless barbarians who are ensnared and degraded by the wiles of the imperial court?

To be sure, such ventriloquism is part of what Tacitus is up to in these passages. Gotarzes' invective against Meherdates, for instance, is in part a response to an earlier speech by the emperor Claudius made on the occasion of Meherdates' release, directly echoing some of its vocabulary.[36] This is obviously a feature of Tacitus' text, not of Parthian rhetoric or historical reality. Nevertheless, there are several reasons to believe that his account reflects a real development in Parthian political discourse in the early first century CE.

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[35] Tac. *Ann*. 14.26.1: *usque ad servilem patientiam demissus*. The closest Tacitus comes to applying this language to an Arsacid is in his assessment of the death of Phraates in Syria in 35 CE, whose succumbing to disease is attributed to his exchanging Rome's customs for Parthia's and being "unequal to his native dispositions" (*patriis moribus impar*): Tac. *Ann*. 6.31.2; cf. Allen, 2006: 233. But this comment stops well short of the accusations that Tacitus assigns to the Parthian enemies of the Arsacids of Rome.

[36] Koestermann, 1967: 132–133. See also the similarities with the return narrative of the Cheruscan prince Italicus: Tac. *Ann*. 11.16–17 with Malloch, 2013: 247–248; Nabel, 2017a: 134–135.

First, Tacitus worked from at least one well-informed source. Many scholars assume very little Roman knowledge about conditions within the Parthian empire, a blank slate that could have given Tacitus more freedom to invent.[37] This skepticism is well founded and necessary, but it ignores the insight that Tacitus could have gained through the testimony of the general Domitius Corbulo, who was one of his sources for eastern affairs.[38] Under Nero, Corbulo campaigned against the Parthians in Armenia for nearly a decade.[39] At one point, he held a number of Arsacids in his camp; at another, he communicated with the Hyrcanians – a population within the Parthian empire – about coordinated action against the Arsacid king Vologaeses I.[40] Corbulo wrote with an agenda, of course, and Tacitus had to treat aspects of his account with caution.[41] Still, the general was in a unique position to supply information about Arsacid dynastic struggles and the domestic political environment within Parthia. Tacitus undoubtedly shaped this material to suit his purposes, but it goes too far to say that he would have been wholly ignorant of Arsacid internal affairs.

Second, comparative evidence suggests that concerns about acculturation – whether real or perceived – were of high importance when long-absent royalty returned to their homelands. There are other ancient examples of elites who supposedly adopted parts of their host's culture. Most of these were prisoners of the Romans, to be sure, and their stories are related by Roman sources.[42] But at least one case shows that the

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[37] See Sonnabend, 1986: 198; Campbell, 1993: 225; Gowing, 1990: 315; Allen, 2006: 225–234.

[38] Tac. *Ann*. 15.16.1–3. The nature of Corbulo's compositions is debated: see Levick, 2013: 541–545; Malloch, 2013: 264 n.159.

[39] From 55–63 CE; for chronology, see Wheeler, 1997. On Corbulo's career in general, see Syme, 1970.

[40] Corbulo receives Arsacids in his camp: Tac. *Ann*. 13.9.1–3. Pliny (*HN* 6.23, 40) cites hostages connected to Corbulo's campaigns as a source of information for eastern geography. Talks with Hyrcanians: Tac. *Ann*. 14.25.2; cf. 13.37.5, 15.1.1; cf. Schottky, 1991: 119; Olbrycht, 1998b: 181–183. See also Tac. *Ann*. 15.27.2, where Corbulo claims knowledge of Parthian domestic affairs.

[41] See Tac. *Ann*. 15.16.3, where Tacitus considers the possibility that Corbulo distorted the truth to besmirch the reputation of his colleague Paetus. Cf. Ehrhardt, 1998: 298.

[42] E.g. the German hostage Agenarich/Serapio (Amm. 16.12.25; cf. Lee, 1991: 368–369); Jovinianus of Corduene (Amm. 18.6.20). Some have seen Vonones' short hairstyle on his drachms as a sign of Roman influence: Sellwood, 1980: 181; Allen, 2006: 176–177; Sinisi, 2012b: 286.

phenomenon was held to work in the other direction: the character of the Seleucid king Demetrius II allegedly worsened through his exposure to "Parthian cruelty" during his years of captivity at the Arsacid court.[43] But whatever the reality behind these supposed transformations, for the present purposes it is far more important that accusations of betrayal levelled at royal hostages and prisoners tended to stick. An illustrative case is the return of Demetrius, son of Philip V and member of the Antigonid royal family, to Macedon after an extended hostageship in Rome.[44] Demetrius' jealous brother Perseus accused him of collusion with the Romans. Livy has Perseus say that, after Demetrius' hostageship, "the Romans gave us back his body, but they held onto his soul themselves."[45] Philip apparently agreed; in the end, he had Demetrius executed. Tarring repatriated dynasts with the brush of Romanization was an effective tactic, as the Arsacids of Rome would learn to their cost.

Finally, there is the evidence from Parthian territory that points to a re-articulation of Arsacid power by the same first century CE kings who confronted the threat of dynastic rivals returning from Rome. The coins of Artabanus II evince some significant departures from the iconographic choices of his predecessors. On one tetradrachm type, a unique forward-facing bust exemplifies the frontality that some see as a defining characteristic of Parthian art starting in the first century CE.[46] On others, Artabanus omitted the common epithet *philellen* – a break from tradition, and perhaps a pointed message to the Greek populations of the empire with whom the king had clashed.[47]

Artabanus' innovations were taken further by Vologaeses I, a leader whose kingship has rightly been seen as a turning point in Parthian history. Vologaeses was the first king since the founder of the Arsacid dynasty to use any language but Greek on his coins.[48] On the obverse of

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[43] Just. 39.1.3: *Antiochenses primi duce Tryphone, execrantes superbiam regis* [sc. *Demetrii*]*, quae conversatione Parthicae crudelitatis intolerabilis facta erat*. On Demetrius' imprisonment by the Arsacids, see Shayegan, 2003.

[44] On Demetrius, see Edson, 1935; Walbank, 1938; Allen, 2006: 1–13.

[45] Liv. 40.5.12: *corpus nobis reddiderunt Romani, animum ipsi habent*.

[46] Sellwood 63/1; Frye, 1984: 246; Colledge, 1977: 143–144; but cf. Sinisi, 2014: 17, 36–50.

[47] Sellwood, 1980: 185; Sinisi, 2012b: 286; cf. Curtis, 2000: 24.

[48] Arsaces I made use of the Aramaic title *krny* on some of his drachms: Sellwood 3/1, 4/1. The office is attested in Achaemenid administrative documents (see Naveh / Shaked, 2012: 190–191) and may be connected with Greek κάρανος: see further Wiesehöfer, 1993: 96; Briant, 2002: 340; Hyland, 2013; Rung, 2015; Sinisi, 2014: 12.

later drachms, an abbreviation of his name appears in Parthian to the right of his diademed bust. On the reverse, the Greek legend is blundered and illegible, having become a pictorial element rather than a textual one.[49] The Avroman documents offer some limited support to the idea that the importance of the Parthian language increased in the first century CE, at least for legal transactions.[50]

The changes may also have had a religious dimension. A proclamation attributed to "Valakhsh the Arsacid" (*Walaxš ī Aškānān*) in the tenth century CE *Dēnkard* records the initiative of a king named Vologaeses to collect and preserve the various traditions of the Avesta and the Zand, the central text of Zoroastrianism and its exegesis.[51] Behramgore Anklesaria's text of the *Zand ī Wahman Yasn* also contains a reference to a Walaxš ī Aškānān, though Carlo Cereti's more recent edition leaves the personal name of the king unrestored.[52] In connection with these passages it is perhaps relevant that the Roman sources call Vologaeses' brother Tiridates a magus and underline the pair's sense of religious propriety.[53] It is not certain that the Middle Persian Zoroastrian texts refer to Vologaeses I rather than one of his successors by the same name, but many scholars see the identification as a distinct or even the most likely possibility.[54] If so, the memory of Vologaeses as an epochal king may suggest that he aligned Arsacid power with the religious authority of Zoroastrianism to an extent that went beyond the self-styling of his predecessors.

Vologaeses also seems to have innovated in more directly subordinating the various lands that made up the Parthian empire to the control of the Arsacid family. In 51/2 CE, he installed his brother Tiridates on the Armenian throne "so that no part of his family would be without dominion,"

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[49] The legend reads *wl*, short for *wlgšy* / Walgaš / Vologaeses: SNP type IVc/4a.α(1c.α) = Sellwood 71/1; see also above, n.3. Some (e.g. Debevoise, 1938: 196; Boyce, 1975: 103) have thought that Vologaeses depicted a Zoroastrian fire altar on his issues, but the element in question is probably a mint monogram: Potts, 2006: 272 n.18.

[50] Avroman I and II date to the first century BCE (88/7 and 22/1, respectively) and are written in Greek; Avroman III dates to 53 CE and is in Parthian. See Wiesehöfer, 2015: 339.

[51] Dk. 412.5–11. For the text, see Shaki, 1981: 115; cf. Boyce, 1984: 113–114. On the transmission of the Avesta generally, see Hintze, 1998; Hoffman / Narten, 1989.

[52] ZVYt. 3.26; compare the texts of Anklesaria, 1957: 14 and Cereti, 1995: 87. See also Boyce, 1968: 49–50; 1984: 91–92.

[53] Plin. *HN* 30.16; Tac. *Ann*. 15.2.1, 15.24.2; cf. Cass. Dio 63.7.2; Lerouge, 2007: 333.

[54] See Debevoise, 1938: 196; Boyce, 1975: 103; Sinisi, 2012a: 20; 2012b: 287; Wiesehöfer, 2015: 339; Wolski, 1993: 174; Olbrycht, 1998b: 185.

as Tacitus puts it.[55] This was not the first Arsacid attempt to wrest Armenia away from the Romans, but it was the first to succeed.[56] Vologaeses also awarded Media to his brother Pacorus.[57] Numismatic evidence suggests that similar developments took place in Characene and Elymais, where the apparent cessation of local dynastic coinage might point to a tighter imposition of Arsacid control.[58] Adiabene and Hyrcania also seem to have been brought back into line, though as with Characene and Elymais there is no direct evidence of their receiving an Arsacid as king.[59] Pliny further attests that Vologaeses sought to curb the power of the often recalcitrant Greek polis Seleucia on the Tigris through the nearby foundation of an eponymous city, Vologesocerta.[60]

Then there is the much-discussed issue of Parthia's reconnection to the Achaemenid past, though here the evidence has sometimes been pushed too far. Not a single piece of contemporary, indigenous Parthian evidence survives that unambiguously positions the Arsacids as the successors to the Achaemenids. The argument that the Arsacids would have considered themselves as such rests largely on their re-employment of the Achaemenid title "king of kings."[61] This is an important development, to be sure, especially since the Seleucids do not seem to have used the term. But it is hardly an unequivocal claim to Achaemenid heritage.

The only sources that do contain such explicit claims are Roman. In a passage in Tacitus' *Annals*, Artabanus II lays claim to the former territories of the Achaemenid and Macedonian empires in a missive to the

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[55] Tac. *Ann*. 12.50.1: *ne qua pars domus sine imperio ageret*; cf. Joseph. *AJ* 20.74. The Romans eventually accepted the arrangement after years of war; see Dąbrowa, 1983: 131–147; Ziegler, 1964: 66–78; Wolski, 1993: 163–175; Debevoise, 1938: 177–195; Wheeler, 1997.

[56] Artabanus II had made a similar effort to win Armenia for his sons: Tac. *Ann*. 6.31.1–33.2; Joseph. *AJ* 18.96–98; Cass. Dio 58.26.1–3. Cf. Philostr. *V A* 2.2, who mentions an Armenian king named Arsaces. On Artabanus' Armenian war as a precedent for Vologaeses, see Hauser, 2005: 196; 2006: 307.

[57] Joseph. *AJ* 20.74; *BJ* 7.7.4; Tac. *Ann*. 15.2.1.

[58] See Dąbrowa, 1991: 143–145; Keall, 1975: 624–625; Schuol, 2000: 339, 395–397; cf. Hauser, 2005: 196 n.115.

[59] Cf. Schottky, 1991: 116–130.

[60] Plin. *HN* 6.122; Sinisi, 2012a: 17 and n.32; Schuol, 2000: 337; Wolski, 1993: 175. Vologaeses may have been responsible for a number of other city foundations: see Olbrycht, 1998b: 184.

[61] For an appraisal of the Arsacid use of this title, see Shayegan, 2011: 39–331.

Roman emperor Tiberius.[62] His appeal to Achaemenid heritage may be part of the reason why a new Arsacid origin myth is found in the second century CE author Arrian; unlike the Augustan-era accounts of Strabo and Trogus/Justin, Arrian records a genealogical link between the Arsacid and Achaemenid dynasties.[63] Such passages might reflect Parthian views. But this is far from certain, especially since the Romans had their own tradition of styling Parthia as a reborn Achaemenid empire.[64]

In sum, Artabanus and Vologaeses do seem to have been rulers who put a new face on the Arsacid monarchy and redeployed Arsacid power in new ways, even if their connection to the Achaemenid past remains unclear. These two kings placed renewed emphasis on the Iranian features of Parthia's heritage which, though always present throughout the empire's history, were nevertheless now invested with a new significance. Moreover, this development seems to have happened partly at the expense of the Arsacid monarchy's connection to the Hellenistic models that had influenced it. The legacy of Greek culture did not disappear overnight, of course; this was the beginning of a gradual change, not a sudden rupture. But as time wore on, the Arsacids increasingly turned towards Iran and away from Greece: towards Iranian religion, language, and models of kingship, and away from the facets of their self-presentation that they had inherited from Greco-Macedonian rulers.

Why did this shift take place in the first century CE? The Arsacids of Rome are an important part of the answer to this question. The first half of the first century saw several cases when recalcitrant Parthian nobles petitioned the Roman emperor for the release of one of these dynasts, whom they then attempted to install on the throne. For Artabanus, this was an existential threat: he was forced to fight both Vonones and Tiridates.[65] For Vologaeses, the threat was potential, but still serious. Tacitus' account may show how these kings and their near contemporaries met these challenges on the level of royal ideology: a new vision of Arsacid kingship was propagated to rob former "hostages" of the Arsacid legitimacy they

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[62] Tac. *Ann*. 6.31.1. For discussion, see Dąbrowa, 1983: 104; Wolski, 1993: 154; Shayegan, 2011: 293–307, 330–331; Fowler, 2005: 125–129; Olbrycht, 1998b: 144–145.

[63] Neusner, 1963: 48; Wiesehöfer, 1993: 179–187, with references.

[64] See Sonnabend, 1986: 281 n. 85; Schneider, 1998: 110–13; 2007: 70 and n. 91; Luther, 2010: 109; Shayegan, 2011: 336 and n.14, with references; see also above.

[65] Artabanus may even have depicted the defeated Vonones on some of his coins: see Sellwood 62/1–10; Sinisi, 2012b: 286.

needed to become king. First, Tacitus suggests, their political enemies argued that what was Arsacid was the opposite of what was Roman – that is, that the two terms were mutually exclusive. Second, they claimed that the returning Arsacids had effectively become Romans by virtue of their long residence in the empire of the Caesars. This line of argumentation delegitimized the Arsacids of Rome, robbing them of the royal status that underpinned their bid for the throne. Since the enemies of Vonones, Tiridates, and Meherdates prevailed on the battlefield, in the end their vision of Arsacid kingship was the one that mattered. The parameters of who counted as an Arsacid duly shifted.

The influence of the Arsacids of Rome explains not only why the victorious Arsacid kings reconnected with Iranian cultural forms, but also why they began to turn away from the Hellenistic traditions that had historically been a significant feature of Arsacid kingship.[66] "De-Hellenization" in first century CE Parthia did not mean a comprehensive program directed against every aspect of Greek culture.[67] Instead, it was a response to contingent political challenges that stemmed, in part, from the Arsacid family's Roman branch. The limited evidence suggests that the Greek communities in Parthia tended to support royal contenders returning from Roman territory in their conflicts against the reigning king. Tiridates was eagerly received by the inhabitants of the predominantly Greek communities in Nicephorium, Anthemusias, and Seleucia on the Tigris as he marched to war against Artabanus II.[68] And in the invective that Tacitus writes for the enemies of Vonones, one of the prime complaints is the king's retinue of Greeks.[69] It surely only exacerbated the situation that (as events like Augustus' *naumachia* show) the Romans had claimed the mantle of the classical Greeks in their struggle against an eastern empire that they saw as a resurrection of Achaemenid Persia. It is against this backdrop – support for returning Arsacids among Parthia's Greeks, and Roman identification with the victors of Salamis – that one should understand developments like Artabanus' avoidance of the epithet *philellen*, the blundered Greek legends on Vologaeses' drachms, and the foundation of Vologesocerta. Political expedience, not cultural policy, trigged the Arsacid disengagement with the Greek past.

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[66] On the depth of the Arsacids' engagement with Greek culture, see Wiesehöfer, 2000.

[67] Wiesehöfer, 2015: 338–341.

[68] Tac. *Ann*. 6.41.2–42.4.

[69] Tac. *Ann*. 2.2.3.

In the end, no source can independently verify or refute Tacitus' description of the return of the Arsacids of Rome to Parthian territory. But Tacitus' narrative shows a discourse and a debate about the nature of Arsacid kingship that helps explain the changes that are evident in the rest of the evidence for the first century CE. Conflict with the Arsacids of Rome forced Parthia's victorious kings to answer the question of what an Arsacid was and what an Arsacid was not. Over time, the positive answers came more and more from Parthia's Iranian heritage, and the negative ones from Greece and Rome. Change in first century CE Parthia, then, is partly a story of interaction with Rome, a story in which the trans-imperial reach of the Arsacid family is of paramount importance. In one sense, it took a rejection of the Romanized Arsacid to invent the Iranian one.

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War and Soldiers in the Achaemenid Empire: Some Historiographical and Methodological Considerations*

Sean Manning

I. Introduction

Readers of Amélie Kuhrt's magnificent *Corpus of Sources from the Achaemenid Period* are greeted with the following confession:

> "There are some apparent omissions. I have no chapters devoted to the Persian armies and warfare nor on imperial or provincial administration. The evidence for this is bitty, often embedded in texts on which (our very partial) reconstruction of the political history depends. I hope that the accompanying notes, together with cross-referencing, will help to compensate for this lack."[1]

In acknowledging that war was an important aspect of the Achaemenid empire, warning that the sources were difficult, and turning aside to focus on other areas, Professor Kuhrt was in good company. Most researchers into the Achaemenid empire since the 1980s have chosen to focus on less martial aspects of history such as court culture and source criticism. Researchers in different fields often touch on military matters but rarely reach outside their disciplines to compare or contrast research in other specialities. Thirty years after the Achaemenid History Workshops convinced scholars that a new approach was necessary, many researchers

* This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. I would like to thank Christopher Tuplin, the participants in the Melammu symposia (especially the respondent Hilmar Klinkott), and my colleagues in Innsbruck for their suggestions and patience. None of them is responsible for any excesses of youthful enthusiasm which remain.

1 Kuhrt, 2007: I.xxix.

continue to write about the Achaemenid army in a way which would be familiar to Eduard Meyer.

While this neglect of the military aspects of the empire reflects the particular context of research in the 1980s and 1990s (see below), it is difficult to justify today. The Achaemenid empire was created by a series of military campaigns, it passed from family to family as the result of such campaigns, and in the end it broke up because another series of wars left no clear winner. Many long-running debates, whether about how Darius became king, or whether the empire was "healthy" or "decadent" in the fourth century, deal with military questions. An empire, after all, is fundamentally a military entity. And in every other area of Achaemenid studies, scholars have found that when they contrasted different types of evidence and reconsidered their assumptions a new view was possible. It seems very likely that rethinking war in the Achaemenid empire would replace many established verities with questions, and that providing new answers to those questions would help scholars understand other aspects of the empire.

Achaemenid Army Studies has never become a recognized speciality with its own communities of scholars, reference texts, methods, and so on. One consequence of this is that scholarship on the army does not always reflect on earlier research, where ideas come from, and whether certain assumptions are justified or necessary. So far as I can tell, the longest overview of research into the Achaemenid army is a few pages in Stefan Bittner's PhD thesis.[2] As part of my dissertation I have written a general study of past research from Hans Delbrück to the present. In this article, I would like to outline that study, describe some of the problems which I can see, and sketch some approaches which I think might be worth trying. Nevertheless, only a prolonged dialogue between scholars with many different perspectives and goals will reveal which approaches are the most effective.

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[2] Bittner, 1987: 73–83. Pierre Briant has also published some comments e.g. Briant, 2002: 1034–1038; Briant, 1997: 54; Briant 2001: 122, 123 n. 251. John Hyland (2011) addresses the question in a book review, and Christopher Tuplin has a page of remarks in Tuplin, 2010: 101, 102. Manning / Degen, in press, treats the history of research more generally.

II. Classical Curiosity

The oldest and most profuse branch of scholarship is that driven by curiosity about Greek literature. Barnabé Brisson, for example, compiled the Greek and Latin sources for the Persians at war in the sixteenth century.[3] Very many scholars who were really interested in Herodotus or the Peloponnesian War or Xenophon's vocabulary have found that they needed to know some things about the Persians to understand their main topic.

Classicists often write specialized studies of particular questions. Every decade or so someone publishes an article on the true name and identity of Herodotus' Immortals, or how the Persians fought the battle of the Granicus.[4] The trouble with this sort of research is that it is driven by Greek literature and by earlier scholarship, rather than by interest in the Persian empire in general. When students of these questions venture to explore Near Eastern sources and scholarship, they rarely find much that is immediately helpful, and withdraw to their Oxford Classical Texts. Yet as thoughtful classicists have long acknowledged, many of the events which inspired Greek writers were less significant to people dwelling away from the Aegean.[5] Some of the 'Persian' terms which Greek writers recorded are equally obscure in texts from other regions.

Studies of the Battle of Marathon or Xerxes' invasion of Greece also tend to contain a study of the army.[6] These works typically paraphrase Herodotus and add a few details from other sources, such as comparing Persian soldiers in reliefs from Persepolis to Persian soldiers in Herodotus' catalogue. The basic approach was sketched by A.V.W. Jackson in 1894, although later authors have better pictures of the monuments and are more likely to cite excavation reports than the *Vendidad* for supporting evidence. At worst, these studies appeal to stereotypes about the orient to make their story more exciting. Peter Green, for example, alternately identifies the Persians with the Red Army and with an oriental horde

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[3] Brissonius, 1710 (posthumous revision of the Paris 1590 edition); Lewis, 1990.

[4] On e.g. the Immortals Charles, 2011; Schmitt, 2006; Sekunda, 1988a: 69–70; Gnoli, 1981; Pagliaro, 1954 are some recent contributions to a literature extending back to the ancient lexicographers and scholiasts.

[5] E.g. Cawkwell, 2005: 1.

[6] E.g. Burn, 1962: 318–330; Hignett, 1963: 40–55; Green, 1996: 58-64; Cawkwell, 2005: appendix 3.

brandishing scimitars.[7] While scholars can normally comfort themselves that literature for specialists uses much more sober language, a more complicated paradigm based on a detailed study of ancient evidence is difficult to find.

Surveys of ancient warfare sometimes contain a chapter on the Persians.[8] The authors of these chapters are usually expert in military affairs, but usually less knowledgeable about the ancient Near East, and the short space available encourages them to lean on previous research and the most accessible sources. Some of these books divide their subject matter by periods and cultures with little cross-linking, and others assume that their job is to describe how military excellence passed from the Near East to Greece to Macedonia to Rome.[9] Both models tend to separate Achaemenid warfare from its broader context in Southwest Asia in the first millennium BCE.

I know of only three books dedicated to the Achaemenids at war. The first, the revised doctoral thesis of Stefan Bittner, concentrates on equipment and on Greek and Latin terminology.[10] It contains some witty criticism of earlier scholarship, but is still written within a classical paradigm. His picture of the Medes and Persians in Xerxes' army attempts to harmonize the *homotimoi* of the *Cyropaedia*, the monumental art which depicts some men in flowing robes and others with fitted tunics and trousers, miscellaneous Greek descriptions of foreign clothing, and the famous passage at Herodotus 7.61.[11] Bittner had the bad luck of finishing his dissertation just as this approach was going out of fashion in favour of one which emphasized Near Eastern evidence and took a much less trusting approach to Greek texts. Other scholars have often cited Bittner's book in lists of suggested reading, but have rarely addressed specific details. Nicholas Sekunda's short book for wargamers devoted much of its space

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7 Green, 1996: 3–6 (miscellaneous tropes about the orient), 8 (Persian commissar), 79 (scimitar), 88 (purveyance, a term with medieval European connotations), 251 ("bow-carrying oriental horsemen").

8 E.g. Warry, 1980; Connolly, 1981; de Souza, 2008; Hackett, 1989; Raaflaub / Rosenstein, 1999.

9 Hans Delbrück already worked from this model of *translatio imperii* but it is still to be found in popular works such as Warry, 1980.

10 Bittner, 1987.

11 Bittner, 1987: 269–271 (Henkelman, 2003: 206 n. 87, a rare comment on one of Bittner's arguments, is not kind).

to analysing soldiers' clothing and providing a rough narrative.[12] While it cited sources which military historians rarely read, and spread knowledge of reconstructed Old Persian military jargon, it did not transform the way scholars think about the Achaemenids at war. Perhaps the best of these books is by Duncan Head.[13] While also a short book for a general audience, it discusses all the major issues and types of evidence, and its assessment is always worth considering. Unfortunately, it was printed in small quantity, and few copies appear to have reached academic libraries.

Scholars with a background in classics or military history tend to be most comfortable with Greek literary evidence, and rely on others to help them with texts in other languages and with art and material remains. Often, the surveys which they cite are written by other classicists, such as Paul Rahe's article on the military background to Cunaxa, Christopher Tuplin's articles on garrisons, cavalry, and the king at war, and Nicholas Sekunda's studies of evidence from Anatolia.[14] Matthew Stolper's work on the Murašû archive has also been influential outside the field of Assyriology.[15] Most scholars with a background in classics and military history have looked to these works for broad theses, rather than engaging with the sources which they present.[16]

III. Near Eastern Studies

As the first powerful, well-documented Iranian dynasty, the Achaemenids have also interested specialists in Iranian history and culture. Often, they touch on military questions in passing as part of a study of Old Iranian languages or early Iranian culture. A dedicated military study is Shahpur Shahbazi's article "Army i. Pre-Islamic Iran" in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*.[17] Shahbazi's article begins by listing types of evidence and warning

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[12] Sekunda, 1992.

[13] Head, 1992.

[14] Rahe, 1981; Sekunda, 1985; Sekunda, 1988b; Sekunda, 1991; Tuplin, 1987; Tuplin, 2010; Tuplin, 2011; Tuplin, 2013. Christopher Tuplin is also compiling lists of combat operations, martial imagery (Tuplin, forthcoming), references to soldiers in documents from the empire, etc. and will publish an article on militaria in the Landmark *Anabasis*. I thank him for making several of these unpublished resources available to me.

[15] Stolper, 1985.

[16] An honourable exception is Dusinberre, 2013 which looks at warfare in Anatolia through the lens of archaeology.

[17] Shahbazi, 1986.

that they are unevenly distributed; he then has brief sections on the Avesta and on the early first millennium BCE, and long ones on the Achaemenid, Arsacid, and Sasanid periods. The section on the Achaemenid period is thorough and cites a wide range of evidence and scholarship, especially works by specialists in Iranian languages and culture which military historians are unlikely to know. He may have provided Anglophone scholars their first overview of military words in Old Iranian. On the other hand, he was obliged to leave out earlier Mesopotamian history and the whole Seleucid period for reasons of space. While that may have been the right decision for an article in *Encyclopaedia Iraniaca*, from the perspective of Achaemenid studies it was an unfortunate choice. Focusing too much on the "Iranian" aspects of the Achaemenid empire can blur differences among Iranian cultures and similarities between Achaemenid, Mesopotamian, and Greek practices. Persian culture was influenced by both Media and Elam, and many soldiers came from areas with their own military traditions.

Another group of scholars studies texts from Babylonia and Egypt in the Achaemenid period. Many are not particularly interested in military questions, but address them whenever it seems necessary to understand the tablets. Scholars such as A. Leo Oppenheim, G. van Driel, Michael Jursa, Cornelia Wunsch, and Caroline Waerzeggers research Late Babylonian society and institutions in general. John MacGinnis and Kristin Kleber have studied military records in temple archives.[18] Rüdiger Schmitt, Muhammad Dandamayev, Ran Zadok, and Michael Tavernier examine Iranians and Iranian words in Babylonian sources.[19] Matthew Stolper's book on the Murašû archive promotes a specific military thesis, namely that the revolt of Darius II led to a financial crisis amongst holders of fiefs.[20] Unfortunately, the tablets from Persepolis do not seem to deal with military affairs, although they do seem to mention guards or spear-bearers.[21] Their seals are also a valuable source for how Persian officials wished to be seen as hunters, warriors, and heroes.[22] Sources such as the Astronomical Diaries sometimes mention military events, and it goes without saying that

[18] MacGinnis, 2012; Kleber, 2014.

[19] e.g. Dandamayev, 1989; Dandamayev, 1992; Schmitt's volumes of the *Iranisches Personennamenbuch;* Tavernier, 2007.

[20] Stolper, 1985.

[21] Henkelman, 2002.

[22] Garrison / Root, 2001; on violence in Achaemenid art in general, see Wu, 2014.

evidence from earlier periods, especially the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian, can be used to supplement sources from the Achaemenid period.[23]

I think that documents in Aramaic and Babylonian are the most promising sources for rethinking war in the Achaemenid empire. The scholarly infrastructure is surprisingly well developed. Scholars interested in tablet Dar. 253, for example, which records the distribution of three years' supplies to three or four horsemen, can now supplement Strassmaier's sketch with four transcriptions or translations, a short book on soldiers in Neo-Babylonian, Teispid, and Achaemenid texts by John MacGinnis, and a number of comments on specific expressions.[24] Scholars at German and Austrian universities have clarified many of the difficulties of the latest forms of cuneiform writing and suggested that Babylonian was a living language later than had previously been thought.[25] The completion of the *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt* and the publication of several dictionaries and grammars have reduced the barriers to working with documents in that language.[26] On the other hand, Aramaic and Babylonian documents provide a partial view of the situation in specific parts of the empire. That situation must also be understood in light of Late Babylonian, Judaean, and Egyptian culture in general. Only certain aspects of military service were recorded on stone or clay. Using this evidence to tell a coherent story and integrating it with other evidence is no easy task, and one which many experienced scholars have felt unable to achieve. If progress is possible, it will likely result from dialogue between military historians, philologists, and social historians.

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[23] Two perspectives on the Astronomical Diary for Gaugamela can be found in Rollinger / Ruffing, 2012 and van der Speck, 2003. On earlier periods, see Hamblin, 2006, Yadin, 1963, Dezsö, 2012, Spallinger, 2005, Vidal, (ed.) 2010, MacGinnis, 2012, Linke, 2015: 292–304.

[24] Sketch: Strassmaier, 1892. Transcriptions or translations: Salonen, 1975: 78; Joannès, 1982: 18; Kuhrt, 2007: 825. Book: MacGinnis, 2012. A bibliography and transcription is available at http://www.achemenet.com/en/item/?/textual-sources/texts-by-languages-and-scripts/babylonian/ebabbar-archive/1657674.

[25] I think especially of Rüdiger Schmitt, of Michael Jursa and his colleagues in Vienna, and Michael P. Streck in Leipzig.

[26] E.g. Hoftijzer / Jonegling, 1995; Muraoka / Porten, 1998; Muraoka, 2012. Two important online resources are the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon http://cal.huc.edu/ and the Arshama Project http://arshama.classics.ox.ac.uk/index.html.

Surveys of the Achaemenid empire also often contain a short discussion of warfare and military practices.[27] The writers of surveys have not tended to be specialists in military history, so have usually tried to stick to a few points which seemed generally accepted. Such summaries have often been useful introductions, providing a judicious selection of details and placing the military aspects in a wider social and economic context. Pierre Briant's comments were particularly lengthy and helpful. On the other hand, they are certainly no substitute for an academic monograph. Matt Waters' recent survey limited its discussion of military matters to a thousand words which alternate between philological notes, summaries of the Greek authorities, and warnings that it is hard to separate the reality from Greek stereotypes.[28] While each of these perspectives has something to offer, a synthesis would be desirable.

IV. The Western Way of War

At the start of this paper I noted that the Achaemenid History Workshops seemed to have little effect on writing about the Achaemenids at war. Another movement of the 1980s had a very great influence, especially on the educated public. This theory is the Western Way of War, associated with the book of the same name by Victor Davis Hanson.[29]

At its simplest, the Western Way of War theory states that Greek culture lead to a unique and effective way of war which later European countries and their colonies inherited. This way of war was based upon great battles between dense formations of heavily armed infantry who were politically free. Thus war is important to the study of ancient Greece because it was central to their culture, and studying ancient Greece is important to us because we inherited their culture and, in particular, their way of war. Versions of this idea can be found earlier; Aeschylus contrasts the free Greek spear and the slavish Persian bow, and Paul Rahe opposes "the infantry of the West" and "the cavalry of the east."[30] Yet Hanson presented it with great rhetorical art, and in the heady atmosphere of the late Cold War there were many eager to hear it.

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[27] E.g. Wiesehöfer, 1994: 132–139; Briant, 2002: 195–198; 340–343, 579–599, 783–800; Huyse, 2005: 90–92, Waters, 2014: 108–111.

[28] Waters, 2014: 108–111.

[29] Hanson, 2000.

[30] Rahe, 1981: 88.

Persians appear in two contexts in *The Western Way of War*. The first is embroidered, emotive passages which contrast the Greeks or the West with everyone else. Hanson repeatedly cites the description of how the Greeks fight which Herodotus attributes to Mardonius (Hdt. 7.9) as saying something profound about Greek and Persian warfare. Early in the book he glosses Mardonius' words as follows:

> "Herodotus' account suggests awe, or perhaps fear, in this man's dismissal of the Greek manner of battle and the Greek desire to inflict damage whatever the costs. Perhaps he is suggesting that Mardonius knew well that these men of the West, for all their ordered squares, careful armament, and deliberate drill, were really quite irrational and therefore quite dangerous. All the various contingents of the Grand Army of Persia, with their threatening looks and noise, had a very different and predictable outlook on battle. In Herodotus' view here, the Persians suffered from that most dangerous tendency in war: a wish to kill but not to die in the process."[31]

Hanson also agrees with the Greek sources that Greek armies were usually outnumbered by foreign enemies, and he sees them sharing this disadvantage with many other "western" armies. As he puts it: "from the Three Hundred at the pass at Thermopylae, to Xenophon's Ten Thousand in Asia Minor, to the frontier Roman garrison, the Crusaders, and European colonial troops, outnumbered Western commanders have never been dismayed by the opportunity to achieve an incredible victory through the use of superior weapons, tactics, and cohesion amongst men."[32] In this context, the Persians serve as a symbol of all foreigners who dared to stand up to "Westerners" in battle, and their gruesome deaths are used to glorify the heroes.

The second context where Hanson mentions the Persians is in discussions of specific problems in Greek battle, where Persian exempla are used alongside Greek, Macedonian, and Roman ones. Thus he wonders why outnumbered Greek armies did not plant the butts of their spears in the ground to receive a charge as the Persians at Mycale did; when considering whether or not Greek soldiers literally pushed their enemies he quotes Xenophon's description of how Egyptians used their tall shields to push; he mentions Napoleonic and Persian parallels for the Greek practice

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[31] Hanson, 2000: 10.

[32] Hanson, 2000: 15 (with the crew of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, one is tempted to ask "what, never?").

of viewing the bodies of dead enemies after the battle.[33] These passages are written in a cool, objective style and assume that all ancient armies are comparable. Yet Hanson is not interested in going beyond Greek and Latin sources for ancient armies. The body of his book does not cite a single text or artefact from the ancient Near East, and the only books on Near Eastern warfare in his short bibliography of 120 items are three surveys.[34] While Hanson cites specific passages and specialized research to support his statements about the Greeks, he relies on loose references to Greek literature and introductory works by modern scholars to support his views on other cultures.

In the past decade Hanson's ideas about Greek warfare have come under intense criticism, but it would be foolish to underestimate their influence.[35] Hanson's CV contains a long list of collaborations, book chapters, and edited collections with famous Anglophone historians of ancient warfare.[36] Geoffrey Parker and John Keegan, two other military historians who wrote for a large audience, accepted Hanson's thesis. Almost anyone interested in ancient warfare encounters the Western Way of War theory early in their education. Today's specialists in Greek warfare often disagree with Hanson's conclusions, but they usually accept his assumption that Greek warfare should be understood in isolation from or opposition to warfare in other cultures.[37] While a few scholars have tried to take a wider view, especially in the last decade, evidence from other cultures has tended to be kept on the margins of the debate. While many

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[33] Hanson, 2000: 136 (Mycale), 174 (pushing), 202 (viewing the enemy dead).

[34] Yadin, 1963; Harmand, 1973; Ferrill 1997.

[35] Some recent works which explicitly reject Hanson's ideas include Lynn, 2008: 12–27; Van Wees 2004; and Brouwers, 2013.

[36] E.g. Hanson (ed.), 1991; Parker (ed.) 1995; Raaflaub / Rosenstein (eds.), 1999; Sabin / van Wees / Whitby (eds.), 2007; Kagan / Viggiano (eds.), 2013.

[37] While the *Cambridge Economic History of the Greek and Roman World* discusses places as far east as Mesopotamia and as early as the beginning of the Iron Age, the recent *Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare* takes its title very literally. Out of twelve chapters on early Greek warfare in Kagan / Viggiano (eds.), 2013, only two pay significant attention to the situation in other cultures, one arguing that "the armed adventurers of the eighth and seventh centuries BC [in eastern kingdoms] may have been the true progenitors of Classical Greek civilization" (Hale, 2013: 191), the other that "in the military aspects of Greek social culture […] Near Eastern influence can be ruled out almost entirely" (Raaflaub, 2013: 103). A better understanding of Greeks, not of hoplites in general, remains the goal of this research.

ancient writers and artists saw hoplites, phalanxes, and citizen-soldiers amongst both Greek and non-Greek nations, most scholars today prefer to focus on Greek examples.[38]

V. War and the State

In 1985 Arthur Ferrill proposed a very different theory about the relationship between Greek and Southwest Asian warmaking.[39] His book was relatively short, lightly referenced, and based on secondary literature, but its central idea is worthy of serious thought. Ferrill observed that weapons for use against humans, fortifications, and pictures of combat between groups appear in the Neolithic, and that by the third millennium BCE warfare in Egypt and the Near East was clearly organized and sophisticated. Thus war has a long history before Classical Greece, but Greece was cut off from this tradition by the collapse at the end of the Bronze Age.[40] The Greeks perfected armies centred around simple formations of heavily armed infantry, but these armies had many limitations. In the fourth century some Greek and Macedonian generals adopted the basic elements of Near Eastern warfare, producing armies which were about as sophisticated and effective as those of the Napoleonic Wars. Ferrill concludes that:

> "Historians have often ironically remarked that the Persian army defending the empire against Alexander's invasions in the fourth century BC contained in the centre of its line a Greek hoplite phalanx, implying that the ancient Near East had learned an important military lesson from

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[38] A full discussion of hoplites. phalanxes, and citizen soldiers who are difficult to call Greeks in the first millennium BCE could easily fill a book. See for example the various peoples armed "like Hellenes" in Hdt. 7.61–99 (some of whom moderns call Greeks, and others who they definitely do not), the ὁπλῖται Αἰγύπτιοι of Xen. An. 1.8.9 and ὁπλῖται Ἀσσύριοι of Xen. An. 7.8.15, the apparent use of characters armed like Egyptians or "like the Persians in pictures" (but not called hoplites) to teach lessons about combat between Greek hoplites in Xen. Cyr., the *kardakes* at Issos who Arrian calls ὁπλῖται (Arr., Anab. 2.8.6), the πολιτικόι στρατιωτόι of Sidon at Diodorus 16.42.2, the Nereid Monument at Xanthus (Anderson, 1970: 34–36), the siege scene on the Amathus Bowl (e.g. Myres, 1933, Hale, 2013), and the paintings of warriors with greaves, crested helmets, Argive shields, and forward-curved swords at Tatarlı (e.g. Summerer, 2007). While this evidence could certainly be interpreted in different ways, specialists in Greek warfare rarely venture an opinion in writing.

[39] Ferrill, 1997.

[40] Ferrill, 1997: 98–99.

> the Greeks. Much more ironic is the fact that Alexander's army owed a vastly greater debt to Persia than the Persian army to Greece."[41]

In Ferrill's view, classical Greek armies were like Archilochus' hedgehog with its one good trick (fr. 201 West), but they became most effective when they learned from the Persian fox with its many tricks. Although other writers had suggested that the Persian invasions forced the Greeks to develop a more sophisticated way of fighting, Ferrill developed this idea at length and backed it with knowledge of warfare in the ancient Near East.[42]

Ferrill's thesis is subversive to the Western Way of War theory, since it implies that the split between Greek and Near Eastern warfare was a temporary accident and that Greek soldiers became more effective when they learned from the Near East. Hanson included Ferrill's book in the short bibliography of *The Western Way of War* but did not engage with it explicitly. He did agree with Ferrill that Xerxes' invasion confronted simple, specialized Greek armies with a much more sophisticated and versatile way of war, but his whole book is opposed to the idea that modern warfare owes more to Alexander and the Ancient Near East than to Archaic Greece.[43] A handful of scholars from other disciplines, such as Gwynne Dyer, have taken Ferrill's approach, but very few specialists in ancient history.[44] Historians sometimes suggest Persian or Punic influence on Greek warfare, but rarely develop the idea at length. Nor has Ferrill's book achieved the popular success of Hanson's, although it did receive a second edition.

VI. Overview and Critique

One hundred years after Eduard Meyer, most writing about the Achaemenid army is still centred around Greek and Latin literature. Scholars with a classical background have diverse views, but they still ask questions driven by their classical sources, and tend to use other kinds of evidence in support and to keep it on the edge of their arguments. On the other hand, scholars from other disciplines often touch on military questions,

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41 Ferrill, 1997: 33.

42 "Other writers" e.g. Adcock, 1957: 11, 12.

43 Partial agreement with Ferrill: Hanson, 2000: 37; distaste for Alexander and the Roman emperors, Hanson, 2000: xviii, xviii (many other expressions of distaste for Alexander and the later Romans are scattered throughout his writings).

44 Dyer, 2006.

but rarely feel comfortable writing a synthesis or rejecting the frameworks provided by classicists. Scholarship on war in the Achaemenid empire is fragmented, without an overarching research framework which brings scholarship from different disciplines together. It would be unfair to criticize booklets for wargamers, chapters in edited collections, or surveys for failing to create such a framework, and most such works achieve what they set out to do. Yet the absence of more detailed, specialized literature which considers military questions in depth outside the narrow framework of classical literature is a serious problem.

The Achaemenid army is usually presented as a childless orphan; that is, it is described in isolation from earlier armies in the same region, and assumed to have had no influence on Greek, Macedonian, or Roman practices. This trope can be found as early as Hans Delbrück, whose *Geschichte der Kriegskunst* begins with Marathon and ignores the east from Gaugamela to Carrhae. Delbrück wrote in a context where the art of war was seen as the art of fighting great battles, and felt that of the sources available to him only Greek and Latin narratives from Herodotus onwards allowed him to write this sort of history for the ancient world. Historians today take a much broader view of military history, and few would be willing to defend the idea that history begins with Herodotus or that Alexander and his successors simply replaced Persian practices with Macedonian ones. Assyriologists have learned a great deal about warfare in the ancient Near East, and many scholars have noticed hints that Persian military practices influenced the Greeks.[45] Many scholars today believe that changes in dynasty did not mark sudden cultural breaks, and that the Persian elite borrowed from all the cultures in their empire.[46] Yet what this meant in military terms has not yet been explored in detail.

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[45] E.g. Anderson, 1970: 23 (cuirass with shoulder flaps possibly borrowed from Egypt); Anderson, 1970: 150; Sekunda, 1992: 25; Sekunda, 1988c: 43 (Xenophon proposed that cavalry adopt Persian equipment or skills); Wheeler / Strauss, 2007: 238 (Athenian besiegers imitated Persian engines and atrocities); Rollinger, 2013 (Greeks and Macedonians learn to cross rivers on inflated skins). Many of these ideas await their first serious treatment, whether favourable, undecided, or unfavourable.

[46] Specialists in Babylonian history (e.g. Warezeggers, 2011: 59) use the term "the long sixth century" to describe the period from the destruction of the Assyrian kingdom to the end of archives in Xerxes' second regnal year without reference to dynastic changes. Three recent volumes which look at the relationship between the Achaemenids and earlier states and cultures are Lanfranchi / Roaf / Rollinger, 2003; Henkelman, 2008; and Álvarez-Mon / Garrison, 2011.

It is unfortunate that several broad works were written before the a new approach had been developed at the Achaemenid History workshops, and that few scholars have imitated Sekunda and Tuplin and considered military questions in depth. The philosophical difficulties are considerable. For example, defining "the Achaemenid army" or the scope of "Achaemenid army studies" or "Achaemenid military history" is not as easy as in some other societies. The Romans of the early Empire have left us a clear understanding of the concepts "war" and "soldier" which researchers can use to decide which events and individuals belong in one category and which do not. Soldiers had distinctive dress and manners, they were listed on rolls and received pay, they often lived apart from their civilian neighbours in distinctive compounds, and they fought for an *imperator* or the *senatus populusque Romanus*. The Achaemenids seem to have drawn on diverse communities and institutions for military manpower, and many individuals seem to have moved several times between the civil and military spheres over the course of their lives. Sources from western Anatolia suggest that distinctions between public and private war, and between foreign and civil war, were difficult to draw. Many of the terms which seem to refer to soldiers in the languages of the empire are difficult to understand. Focusing on ethnic Persians or on royal troops might help to narrow the scope, but would also exclude a large fraction of what limited evidence survives.[47]

VII. A Sketch of an Alternative Approach

While deconstructing the assumptions and goals of previous research helps explain the state of the literature, it does not by itself lead to better research. Making these assumptions explicit encourages scholars to consider whether they are correct and how one might decide which were most likely to be correct, but it does not summon new research from nothing. How might scholars study war in the Achaemenid empire with the same rigour which they apply to other aspects of Achaemenid history?

First, war in the Achaemenid empire should be put in the context of war in Southwest Asia during the last three millennia BCE. Egyptologists and Assyriologists have published a variety of surveys which simultaneously enable the non-specialist to use such comparative evidence and oblige him

[47] Experiments with such an approach include Briant, 1999: 108; Sekunda, 1985, 1988b, 1991; Tuplin, 2010: 107–112.

or her to be aware of it.[48] I think that most experts would agree that the Achaemenid empire cannot just be understood from a Greek perspective, or a Mesopotamian perspective, or an Iranian perspective, but that knowledge of all of these cultures has something to contribute. While this is challenging, it is also hopeful, since it suggests that the inherent limits and difficulties of each of these types of evidence might be overcome.

Second, more attention needs to be paid to less traditional sorts of evidence. To date, writers have tended to base their understanding of military affairs on Greek and Latin literature, and to a lesser extent monumental art and vase paintings. While seals, royal inscriptions, legal documents, funerary monuments, and remains of weapons are all difficult sources, they have been studied much less intensively than the classical literary evidence has. The flowering of research into the Achaemenid empire has made other types of evidence more accessible to the non-specialist. Sometimes a comment in a Greek source is best understood in light of a Hittite relief, or a receipt for bricks from Babylonia.[49] The use of other types of evidence is certainly well established in Greek and Roman military history.

Third, Greek and Latin literature should be read according to the critical perspective developed at the Achaemenid History Workshops. Scholars in this tradition accept that Greek and Latin literature is crucial for understanding the Achaemenid empire, but they are intensely aware that this tradition was shaped by misunderstanding, bias, and the hindsight of book-buyers in later periods who 'knew' that the story of the Achaemenid empire ended with Alexander. Much work on the Achaemenid army stitches together passages from Herodotus, Xenophon, and the Alexander historians without asking hard questions about why these authors say what they do, what assumptions we are making when we interpret them, and whether it would be possible to cite different passages to tell a different story. While finding a balance between excessive credulity and postmodern agnosticism is difficult, it is necessary for writing about any area of ancient history.

Two types of scholarship on ancient warfare might provide models. The first is Ferrill's "war and the state" approach and its insights that war in many ancient societies was comparable and that richer, larger-scale societies tend to have more sophisticated military institutions.

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[48] E.g. Beale, 1992 (*non vidi*); Redford, 2003; Spalinger, 2005; Darnell / Manassa, 2007; Howard, 2011; MacGinnis, 2012; Dezsö, 2012, Linke, 2015: 292–304.

[49] Tallis, 2010; Stolper, 1992.

While specific examples remain to be proved, it is certainly plausible that changes in warfare west of the Aegean recapitulated developments which had occurred much earlier in the countries to the east. The other is Roman Army Studies.[50] Students of the Roman army in the early empire also study an imperial army, and one which produced many kinds of evidence in peace and in war. They expect new research to show awareness of a variety of kinds of evidence, even if a given paper is likely to focus on one. They also organize conferences and write handbooks to introduce newcomers to their field and keep up to date. While an auxiliary diploma and a cuneiform ration ticket are different, the methods which help to interpret one may help with the other. Specialists in the Roman army also have a long tradition of analysing change, continuity, and influence from neighbouring cultures or literary models. Careful attention to this research might suggest solutions to some of the fundamental methodological problems, and help avoid lines of thought which proved unhelpful in other areas of research.

Finding a better way to think about war in the Achaemenid empire will not be quick or easy. The sheer variety and difficulty of the sources demands that scholars from a variety of disciplines (and with a variety of professional perspectives) take part. Historical research is governed by heuristics not fixed rules, and only experimentation with different methods and debates between researchers with different assumptions can reveal the best way forward. The history of other areas of research suggests that even if a community of scholars began working on the problem tomorrow, it would be decades before a new synthesis appeared. My own work will, at best, contribute to a conversation which might lead to such a synthesis.[51] Yet sources and methods are available, and a better understanding of the Achaemenid army would help us understand both the empire itself and a common human activity in a particular time and place. Although the search will be difficult, it is certainly in keeping with the spirit of the Melammu symposia.[52]

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[50] For an introduction see James, 2002. One good example of Roman army scholars' willingness to break free from simple ethnic oppositions is Sanz, 2006.

[51] My doctoral dissertation (Manning, 2018) will form the basis of a monograph which will appear (*dis volentibus*) in 2020.

[52] E.g. Rollinger, 2015.

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The Winner Takes it All? Reflections on Persian Booty and Persian Cultural Property in Wartime*

Sabine Müller

Introduction: Between *topos* and Reality

> "Saith Dareios the King: Thou who shalt hereafter behold this inscription which I have inscribed, or these sculptures, do thou not destroy them, (but) thence onward protect them, as long as thou shalt be in good strength."[1]

This passage of the Behistun inscription refers to a universal problem: the preservation of cultural property and heritage, especially in times of change or unrest. For Dareios I who commissioned the multi-lingual inscription and relief on the rocks of Behistun, its conservation was essential.[2] The monument and text reflected his legitimacy, thus justifying his accession. In a future perspective, this testimony also served the legitimization of his successor(s).[3] However, in the past and present, particularly in the course of warfare, deliberate vandalism to cultural remains, often caused by marauding armies, was a common phenomenon. Shahrokh Razmjou attempted to categorize the various types of damages inflicted on cultural property in wartime:

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* Acknowledgements: I would like to thank Johannes Heinrichs, Jake Nabel, Marek Jan Olbrycht, Robert Rollinger, Rahim Shayegan and Josef Wiesehöfer for their helpful comments.

1 DB IV § 65. Trans. R.G. Kent. On the relief's iconography see Rollinger, 2016.

2 However, by choosing an immobile relief and a site high up a mountain that was hard to reach, Dareios I took wise precautions regarding the possible preservation of the Behistun monument.

3 Cf. Rollinger, 2006; Wiesehöfer, 2005: 33–35; Wiesehöfer, 1978.

1. Damage caused by non-military persons without any ideological motivation
2. Damage caused by invading armies
3. Damage ordered by an authority motivated by ideological reasons.[4]

This paper will be concerned especially with the second category: the damage caused by invading armies. It may appear to be a rather known and conventional subject. However, as there exists an ancient discourse about how to behave regarding foreign people's cultural belongings (such as monuments, works of art and treasures), it gives interesting insight into moral judgments, ideologies, constructions of identity, images of the 'other', political propaganda and strategies of legitimization.

In the Greek and Roman cultural memory, the treatment of the enemy's cultural property and artefacts in wartime was an issue used as a marker of appropriate behaviour. Obviously, there existed an ideological literary discourse about the "right" way that commanders and soldiers were expected to behave regarding the opponent's cultural artefacts. This is especially the case with sanctuaries and their property, such as cult images or sacred items used in rituals. For example, Polybios states:

> τί δ' Ἀλέξανδρος; ἐκεῖνος γὰρ ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἐξοργισθεὶς Θηβαίοις ὥστε τοὺς μὲν οἰκήτορας ἐξανδραποδίσασθαι, τὴν δὲ πόλιν εἰς ἔδαφος κατασκάψαι, τῆς γε πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς εὐσεβείας οὐκ ὠλιγώρησε περὶ τὴν κατάληψιν τῆς πόλεως, ἀλλὰ πλείστην ἐποιήσατο πρόνοιαν ὑπὲρ τοῦ μηδ' ἀκούσιον ἁμάρτημα γενέσθαι περὶ τὰ ἱερὰ καὶ καθόλου τὰ τεμένη. καὶ μὴν ὅτε διαβὰς εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν μετεπορεύετο τὴν Περσῶν ἀσέβειαν εἰς τοὺς Ἕλληνας, παρὰ μὲν τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπειράθη λαβεῖν δίκην ἀξίαν τῶν σφίσι πεπραγμένων, τῶν δὲ τοῖς θεοῖς καταπεφημισμένων πάντων ἀπέσχετο, καίπερ τῶν Περσῶν μάλιστα περὶ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος ἐξαμαρτόντων ἐν τοῖς κατὰ τὴν Ἑλλάδα τόποις.
>
> "Again in the case of Alexander the Great: He was so enraged with the Thebans that he sold all the inhabitants of the town into slavery, and levelled the city itself with the ground; yet in making its capture he was careful not to outrage religion, and took the utmost precautions against even involuntary damage being done to the temples, or any part of their sacred enclosures. Once more, when he crossed into Asia, to avenge on the Persians the impious outrages which they had inflicted on the Greeks, he

[4] Cf. Razmjou, 2002: 90.

> did his best to exact the full penalty from men, but refrained from injuring places dedicated to the gods; though it was in precisely such that the injuries of the Persians in Greece had been most conspicuous."[5]

In consequence, burning or plundering temples was a major accusation in order to blacken the portrait of a commander and his troops. It was regarded as a most violent, impious, thus "barbarian" act.[6] However, in the context of this discourse on the appropriate treatment of other people's cultural products, also non-sacral artefacts carrying a symbolic value such as statues or books played a certain role. For the winner, valuable artefacts taken from the defeated represented both desirable booty and trophies that could be proudly displayed in public. For example, this is the case with the exposition of the treasuries of the defeated in the Roman triumph. On the other hand, for the defeated, the removal of their symbols of identity and culture made their loss complete and was probably meant to have a demoralizing effect. This is assumed regarding the Near Eastern war strategy to take away and "hold captive" the opponent's cult images:[7] "Spoliated statues were usually carried off to the land of the victorious power (…) where they remained in captivity until a turn of events would allow them to be restored to their shrines."[8] According to the underlying thought pattern, the cult images were perceived as divine incarnations. Thus, their translocation was equated with the gods' departure from the land, thereby depriving the inhabitants of the divine shelter.[9]

However, interestingly, on the contrary, the commemoration of the destruction or translocation of specific objects of cultural property could also serve to keep the spirit of resistance (occasionally at least artificially)

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[5] Polyb. 5.10.6–8. Trans. E.S. Shuckburgh. Reportedly, when destroying Thebes, Alexander also spared the house of Pindar and his descendants: Diod. 17.13.3–4; Just. 11.4.7–9; Arr. *an*. 1.9.10; Ael. *VH* 13.7. Interestingly, while in this passage, Polybios echoes the panhellenic Macedonian propaganda stating that Alexander set out in order to avenge the injuries inflicted on the Greeks by the Persians (cf. Diod. 16.89.3; 17.4.9; Just. 11.2.5; Curt. 3.10.8–9; 5.6.1; Plut. *Alex.* 16.8), in the case of Philip II, he characterizes this claim as a mere pretext of war (*prophasis*): Polyb. 3.6.3–14.

[6] Cf. Kousser, 2009: 274.

[7] Cf. Gruen, 2011: 51; Kuhrt, 2010: 287, n. 2; Kousser, 2009: 268; Strocka, 2002: 96. On this practice see Kuhrt, 2010: 72, n. 4; van de Mieroop, 2003: 10–11; Miles, 2008: 16–20; Vittmann, 2003: 29; Strocka, 1999: 10–14; Beaulieu, 1993: 241–244.

[8] Beaulieu, 1993: 242. See also Miles, 2008: 16–20.

[9] Cf. Vittmann, 2003: 29; Beaulieu, 1993: 242.

alive, hence to have a motivating effect. Most famously, this is the case with the Greek remembrance of the treatment of their cultural property during the Persian Wars. The theme of Persian destruction and theft of Greek artefacts, especially during Xerxes' campaign, kept on being commemorated as a central point of reference.[10] Regarding the literary tradition, interestingly as well as suspiciously, the theme was highlighted in the fourth century in the context of the panhellenic ideology.[11] In addition, it bloomed again in the time of the Second Sophistic.[12] Keeping this in mind, it is obvious that the literary evidence for Persian "vandalism" and "art robbery" in war times is to be treated with great caution. Against this ideological background, it is no surprise that in the literary sources, Alexander and his Successors are credited with the restoration of Greek cultural property once carried away by the Persians.[13] They are depicted as the good ones recompensing Persian wrongs. In consequence, it can even be said that restoring stolen cultural property became a relevant element of the Macedonian political self-fashioning and strategy of legitimization. In the literary tradition, it became a *topos*:[14] the good ruler restores the cultural exhibits the bad ruler had stolen. However, archaeological and literary evidence reveals that the Macedonian conquerors themselves did not always treat cultural property respectfully when they came across it in Persia.

This paper aims at scrutinizing the literary *topos* of the "Persian art thefts in wartime" against the background of the political Greek and Roman discourse on the treatment of the enemy's cultural property. In addition, it will examine the treatment of Persian cultural property by the Macedonian conquerors as attested by literary and non-literary evidence. In the end, it will be argued that the theme of Persian theft of cultural property and the theme of its restoration by the conquerors of Persia were inextricably linked with political discourses, ideology, strategies of legitimization of rule as well as constructions of identity. This can be deduced from

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[10] Cf. Miles, 2014; Kousser, 2009.

[11] Cf. Miles, 2014: 126–133; Miles, 2008: 26. See also Kousser, 2009: 269–270; West, 1969.

[12] Cf. Miles, 2014: 137; Ziegler, 2007: 162, 165.

[13] Arr. *an*. 3.16.7–8; 7.19.2; Val. Max. 2.10.ext.1; Plin. *NH* 34.70; Paus. 1.8.5; 1.16.3; 8.46.3; Gell. 7.17.1–2.

[14] Cf. Müller, 2009: 304–305; Briant, 2003: 175–183; Hölbl, 1994: 73.

the specific times in which the themes were highlighted: on the eve of the Macedonian campaign, in the midst of the panhellenic intellectual utterings, the image of the plundering Persians served to keep the Greek allies in line covering up that the revenge theme was a mere pretext.[15] In the imperial times of the Second Sophistic, the literary commemoration of the art thefts and the restoration was twofold: first of all, by referring to these themes, the authors could prove their knowledge of the Greek literary heritage that served them as their symbolic capital and central point of identification.[16] Second, on a political level, the Persians were equated with the Parthians, Rome's serious opponent in the East.[17] Thus, the image of the impious intruder from the East made sense for the Roman propaganda, too. In consequence, it will be shown that the theme of the Persian destruction and plundering was a useful political tool that was reactivated in times when a campaign against "the East" was planned. It seems to have developed into a kind of propagandistic code like a battle cry. Thereby, the commemoration of the Greek and Macedonian victories was always implicit.

How to Behave Inappropriately: Persian Booty According to the Greek and Roman Literature

According to the Greek and Roman literary sources, Xerxes went home with a remarkable collection of Greek cultural items in his baggage train, among them the early group of Harmodios and Aristogeiton made by Antenor, the cult statues of Artemis from Brauron and Apollon of Didyma, and the so-called "Water-Carrier", a bronze sculpture once dedicated by Themistokles when he was the Athenian water commissioner.[18] The story about the Water-Carrier has an ironic flair: Allegedly, Themistokles found it himself at Sardeis when he was an exile who had fled from Athens and entered into the services of the Great King:

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[15] On the Macedonian panhellenic propaganda as a mere pretext see Squillace, 2010; Flower, 2000; Seibert, 1998.

[16] Cf. Whitmarsh, 2005.

[17] Cf. Ziegler, 2007.

[18] Arr. *an*. 3.16.7–8; 7.19.2; Val. Max. 2.10.ext.1; Plin. *NH* 34.70; Paus. 1.8.5; 1.16.3; 8.46.3; Plut. *Themist*. 31.1.

> ὡς δ᾽ ἦλθεν εἰς Σάρδεις καὶ σχολὴν ἄγων ἐθεᾶτο τῶν ἱερῶν τὴν κατασκευὴν καὶ τῶν ἀναθημάτων τὸ πλῆθος, εἶδε δὲ ἐν μητρὸς ἱερῷ τὴν καλουμένην ὑδροφόρον κόρην χαλκῆν, μέγεθος δίπηχυν, ἣν αὐτὸς ὅτε τῶν Ἀθήνησιν ὑδάτων ἐπιστάτης ἦν, ἐλὼν τοὺς ὑφαιρουμένους τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ παροχετεύοντας, ἀνέθηκεν ἐκ τῆς ζημίας ποιησάμενος, εἴτε δὴ παθών τι πρὸς τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν τοῦ ἀναθήματος εἴτε βουλόμενος ἐνδείξασθαι τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις, ὅσην ἔχει τιμὴν καὶ δύναμιν ἐν τοῖς βασιλέως πράγμασι, λόγον τῷ Λυδίας σατράπῃ προσήνεγκεν αἰτούμενος ἀποστεῖλαι τὴν κόρην εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας.
>
> "When he had come to Sardis and was viewing at his leisure the temples built there and the multitude of their dedicatory offerings, and saw in the temple of the Mother the so-called Water-carrier, – a maid in bronze, two cubits high, which he himself, when he was water commissioner at Athens, had caused to be made and dedicated from the fines he exacted of those whom he convicted of stealing and tapping the public water, – whether it was because he felt some chagrin at the capture of the offering, or because he wished to show the Athenians what honor and power he had in the King's service, he addressed a proposition to the Lydian satrap and asked him to restore the maid to Athens."[19]

As Jon Mikalson comments, Themistokles, "the hero of the battle of Salamis, personally was involved in repairing some of the damage caused by the Persians in Athens".[20] Thereby, additionally, he himself is under Persian influence. Conspicuously, the story is too good to be true. Fittingly, in the Second Sophistic, when the high praise of the Greek literary heritage reached its climax, Xerxes was also accused of having stolen numerous books from Athens:

> […] *sed omnem illam postea librorum copiam Xerxes Athenarum potitus urbe ipsa praeter arcem incensa abstulit asportavitque in Persas. Eos porro libros universos multis post tempestatibus Seleucus rex, qui Nicanor appellatus est, referendos Athenas curavit.*
>
> "[…] but later Xerxes, when he got possession of Athens and burned the entire city except the citadel, removed that whole collection of books and carried them off to Persia. Finally, a long time afterwards, King Seleukos, who was surnamed Nikator, had all those books taken back to Athens."[21]

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[19] Plut. *Themist*. 31.1. Trans. B. Perrin. Cf. Kuhrt, 2010: 286, n. 3; Palagia, 2008: 224.

[20] Mikalson, 2003: 75.

[21] Gell. 7.17.1–2. Trans. J. C. Rolfe.

All of this evidence has to be treated with caution. First, the earliest Greek authority on the Persian Wars, Herodotos, while attesting the Persian sack of Athens and the destruction of the Acropolis, does not mention any of these specific thefts.[22] Second, except for the testimony on the Water-Carrier, the art thefts are mentioned in the context of the restoration of the artefacts by either Alexander or one of his successors. For example, Arrian states:

> παρελθόντι δ᾽ αὐτῷ ἐς Βαβυλῶνα πρεσβεῖαι παρὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐνέτυχον (…) καὶ τούτους δεξιωσάμενός τε καὶ τὰ εἰκότα τιμήσας ἀποπέμψαι ὀπίσω λέγεται. ὅσους δὲ ἀνδριάντας ἢ ὅσα ἀγάλματα ἢ εἰ δή τι ἄλλο ἀνάθημα ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος Ξέρξης ἀνεκόμισεν ἐς Βαβυλῶνα ἢ ἐς Πασαργάδας ἢ ἐς Σοῦσα ἢ ὅπῃ ἄλλῃ τῆς Ἀσίας, ταῦτα δοῦναι ἄγειν τοῖς πρέσβεσι: καὶ τὰς Ἁρμοδίου καὶ Ἀριστογείτονος εἰκόνας τὰς χαλκᾶς οὕτω λέγεται ἀπενεχθῆναι ὀπίσω ἐς Ἀθήνας.
>
> "When Alexander had entered Babylon, embassies came to meet him from the Greeks (…) He is said to have received them graciously, sent them home with appropriate honour and given them to take back all the statues or images or other votive offerings Xerxes had removed from Greece to Babylon, Pasargadai, Susa, or anywhere else in Asia, and it is said that the bronze statues of Harmodios and Aristogeiton were taken back to Athens in this way."[23]

Third, while there can be no doubt that the theme of the Persian art robbery already originated from the primary Alexander historiographers,[24] it is striking that all of the evidence stems from authors writing in Roman times and most of them living in the Second Sophistic and in the second century AD: Plutarch, Arrian, Pausanias and Aulus Gellius. Furthermore, Arrian and Pausanias both had Hadrian's Athens in mind when recalling the Athenian role in the Persian Wars.[25] For Hadrian, the outspoken patron of Greek culture, Athens had a special meaning.[26] It will be no accident that in the Second Sophistic and especially in the time of the philhellene

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[22] Hdt. 8.53.2–55.1; 8.109.3. Cf. Thuk. 1.89.3. On Herodotos and Xerxes see Rollinger, 2003.

[23] Arr. *an*. 7.19.1–2. Trans. P. A. Brunt.

[24] Cf. Habicht, 2006: 156, n. 2; Briant, 2003: 178–180.

[25] Paus. 1.20.7; Arr. *an*. 3.16.8. Cf. Müller, 2016b: 187–191; Galimberti, 2007: 136–137.

[26] Cf. Galimberti, 2010: 72–73, 78–83; Galimberti, 2007: 123–124, 190; Birley, 1997: 58–65.

Hadrian, the commemoration of the Persian devastation during Xerxes' campaign reached another peak.[27] For example, Pausanias attests the existence of blackened and damages statues in Athens, according to him originals stemming from the time of the Persian Wars left as memorials by the Greeks who fought the Persians:

> ἀρχαῖα: καί σφισιν ἀπετάκη μὲν οὐδέν, μελάντερα δὲ καὶ πληγὴν ἐνεγκεῖν ἐστιν ἀσθενέστερα: ἐπέλαβε γὰρ καὶ ταῦτα ἡ φλόξ, ὅτε ἐσβεβηκότων ἐς τὰς ναῦς Ἀθηναίων βασιλεὺς εἶλεν ἔρημον τῶν ἐν ἡλικίᾳ τὴν πόλιν.
>
> "There are also old figures of Athena, no limbs of which indeed are missing, but they are rather black and too fragile to bear a blow. For they too were caught by the flames when the Athenians had gone on board their ships and the King captured the city emptied of its able-bodied inhabitants."[28]

In consequence, one gets the impression that the theme of Xerxes' robberies was a Macedonian propagandistic claim once publicized in order to pose as a benefactor of Greece and in the Roman afterlife pumped up again by Greek intellectuals under Roman rule as a means of constructing their self-identity triggered by the memory of the glorious past. However, in scholarship, doubts about the historicity of the reports on the Persian art thefts are rare.[29] The majority believes that Xerxes carried the statues off to Persia where they were found about 150 years later by the Macedonians who obviously had a profound understanding of Greek art and thus no problem with recognizing and identifying them so that they could restore them to their former owners.[30] The "tyrannicides" and "Water-Carrier" seem to be a special problem: In contrast to the statues of Apollon and Artemis, these sculptures were no cult images and did not belong to a temple. Hence, the theft of them does not fit into the pattern of "Near

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[27] Cf. Ziegler, 2007; Bowie, 1970: 28–29.

[28] Paus. 1.27.6. Trans. W. H. S. Jones.

[29] Cf. Rollinger / Wiesehöfer, 2018 (see the part by Josef Wiesehöfer on the Persians and Greek statues in Herodotus: He points out that there is no proof of any of these alleged thefts by Xerxes and his army); Habicht, 2006: 155–156, n. 2–3; Briant, 2003: 175–182; Scheer, 2003; Bringmann / von Steuben, 1995: 436; Moggi, 1973. Gerhard Wirth also doubts the historicity (information in a letter).

[30] Cf. f.e. Azoulay 2014: 53–54; Gruen, 2011: 51; Bayliss, 2011: 238, n. 51; Kuhrt 2010, 286, n. 3, 287, n. 2; Palagia, 2008: 224; Kousser, 2009: 268; Miles, 2008: 40; Hutton, 2005: 289–290 with n. 38; Boardman, 2003: 164; Mikalson, 2003: 74–75; Strocka, 2002: 96–98; Boucharlat, 2002; Strocka, 1999: 13–14; McGlew, 1993: 153; Kawami, 1986: 259; Roaf, 1980: 72; Bosworth, 1980: 317.

Eastern carrying off the opponent's cult statues". However, predominantly, the problem is solved by the assumption that regarding the "tyrannicides", Xerxes wanted to put down a marker against Athenian *eleutheria* and democracy.[31] In the case of the Water-Carrier, he is assumed to have put down a marker against Themistokles.[32]

Being one of the few sceptics, Pierre Briant points out that usually, according to the Near Eastern antecedents, the one who took the statues was also the one to restore them: Thus, if they were stolen by them at all, the Persians themselves may have given them back.[33] Sharing the doubts about the historicity of the theft and the Macedonian rediscovery, I suggested recently that it may have originated from the restoration of some Greek artworks from Persia found by Alexander. In his literary afterlife, the tradition was pumped up by specifying some of the statues among the shipments in accordance with Xerxes' bad image as the arch-enemy of Greece and Alexander as the panhellenic avenger.[34] Doubtlessly, if Alexander wanted to pose as benefactor and patron of Greek culture by restoring Greek artworks and artefacts, he could make a find in the Achaimenid capitals and treasuries.[35] Archaeological and literary evidence attests the existence of Greek artists and art in the Achaimenid Empire that was obviously much appreciated.[36] However, not all of the Greek artefacts there were the results of Persian pillage. Rather, they were testimonies of the history of cultural contact, exchange and interaction between Persia and Greece.[37] Artisans and artists as well as artworks were imported

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[31] Cf. Gruen, 2011: 51; Miles, 2008: 26: McGlew, 1993: 153. Alternatively, Azoulay 2014: 39–54 thinks that the Peisistratids wanted to get possession of the statues.

[32] Cf. McGlew, 1993: 153.

[33] Cf. Briant, 2003: 178.

[34] Cf. Müller, 2016b: 181–182.

[35] Cf. Gruen, 2011: 50; Erickson, 2009: 44, n. 43; Boardman, 2003: 164; Kawami, 1986; Roaf, 1983; Roaf, 1980: 71–72; Roaf / Boardman, 1980. This means that the Macedonians did not restore all the Greek works of art they found there. In Dareios I's foundation inscription from his palace in Susa, Ionian stonecutters are mentioned (DSf § 13).

[36] Cf. Gruen, 2011: 50; Boardman, 2003: 164; Kawami, 1986; Roaf, 1983; Schmitt, 1983; Roaf, 1980: 71–72; Roaf / Boardman, 1980. There were Greek sculptures, red figured vases, a fragment of a rhyton signed by Sotades and five short inscriptions in Greek in a quarry near Persepolis.

[37] Cf. Kawami, 1986: 267.

from Greece.[38] In addition, as the treasuries were storehouses primarily for "objects brought to Persia as a form of gift-tribute",[39] many of the accumulated valuables were not taken as war booty but came as some sort of tribute or formed part of diplomatic exchange in form of gifts.[40] According to the predominant opinion, a famous example for such a present given to the Great king by a Greek city is the so-called Penelope from Persepolis, a life-size fragmented Greek statue of white marble.[41] It is assumed that it represented Penelope sitting and waiting for Odysseus and dated from the mid-fifth century BC.[42]

The Macedonian propaganda and the Greek and Roman writers tend to simplify the history of the relationship between Persia and the Greek *poleis* with the complex and multi-faceted cultural contacts and elements of acculturation. According to this depiction in black and white terms, Greek artefacts found in the Achaimenid Empire were always booty carried off by Persian troops. Supposedly, the Greek leading circles and especially the Macedonian court society with its longstanding relations to the Persian Empire ever since the reign of Amyntas I knew better. They will have had a clue about the circumstance that much of the Greek artefacts in Persia were imports, tribute and gifts. In this context, Trudy Kawami's observation that some dog sculptures from Persepolis resembling a Macedonian example from Pella may "be seen as another link between the artistic traditions of the two cultures"[43] is especially notable. Additionally, the goat sculptures from Persepolis dated in the reign of Xerxes[44] may reflect this Macedonian-Persian-connection: Xerxes' ally, Alexander I of Macedonia, seems to have a learned a lot about the visualization of monarchy and imperial iconography from his Persian patron.[45] The goat was a key element of the founding myth of

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38 Cf. Boucharlat, 2002. In Dareios I's inscription from his palace in Susa, Ionian stone carvers are mentioned (DSf § 13).

39 Cahill, 1985: 386.

40 Cf. Cahill, 1985: 387.

41 Cf. Hölscher, 2011 (a diplomatic gift by the delegation of Kallias); Palagia, 2008: 232 (a gift given by Thasos); Gauer, 1991 (a gift from a Greek city in Asia Minor symbolizing the wish to get freed by the Persian king from the Athenian suppression). See also Kawami, 1986: 255–260.

42 Cf. Gruen, 2012: 50, with n. 197; Neer, 2010: 164.

43 Kawami, 1986: 263.

44 Kawami, 1986: 266.

45 Cf. Heinrichs / Müller, 2008: 287–291. See also Müller, 2016a: 125–129.

his Argead dynasty and became a standard feature of the Macedonian royal coinage.[46] Whether these two parallels in the animal sculpture from Persepolis are mere coincidence is debatable. However, despite the long standing relations and cultural interactions between Macedonia and Persia that will undoubtedly have provided the Macedonian court with intensified knowledge about the Achaimenid culture, for propagandistic reasons, the depiction of the Persian Empire in black and white terms was more advisable. In consequence, the alleged large-scale Persian art thefts formed part of the propaganda of the primary historiographers of Alexander in order to style him as a panhellenic benefactor of Greece making him look better against the negative counter-image of the allegedly notorious and impious art thief Xerxes.

How to Behave Appropriately: Macedonians and Cultural Property in the Conquered Cities (Part 1)

Alexander and his successors who were credited with the restoration of the Greek cultural property (or in the case of the Ptolemies, with the restoration of Egyptian items)[47] were depicted as role models for the appropriate behavior regarding artefacts as booty. Another anecdote illustrates the ideal way of treating (Greek) cultural property in conquered cities. It will be no coincidence that it is told by Plutarch writing in the Second Sophistic when images, imagery, and aspects of iconotext played a crucial role in the intellectual debate:[48]

> διὸ καὶ πλείονας ἡμέρας ἐν τῇ πόλει διέτριψεν ἐν αἷς καὶ Θεοδέκτου τεθνηκότος ἦν δὲ Φασηλίτης ἰδὼν εἰκόνα ἀνακειμένην ἐν ἀγορᾷ, μετὰ δεῖπνον ἐπεκώμασε μεθύων καὶ τῶν στεφάνων ἐπέρριψε πολλούς, οὐκ ἄχαριν ἐν παιδιᾷ ἀποδιδοὺς τιμὴν τῇ γενομένῃ δι᾽ Ἀριστοτέλην καὶ φιλοσοφίαν ὁμιλίᾳ πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα.
>
> "This was the reason for his spending several days in that city, during which he noticed that a statue of Theodektes, a deceased citizen of Phaselis, had been erected in the marketplace. Once, therefore, after supper and in his cups, he led a band of revelers to the statue and crowned it with many of

[46] Hdt. 8.137–138 (Perdiccas I as shepherd); Just. 7.1–2 (the role of the white goats and the founding of Aigai). Cf. Müller 2016a: 86, 91, 98, 100–103.

[47] Cf. Müller, 2009: 302–305, Hölbl, 1994: 73–75.

[48] Cf. Frances, 2003: 582, 592.

> their garlands, thus in pleasantry returning no ungraceful honor for the past association with the man which he owed to Aristotle and philosophy."[49]

Theodektes was a known contemporary orator, rhetorical theorist and tragic poet, born in Phaselis and active in Athens, a student of Isokrates. He was also said to have been a student of Plato and Aristotle.[50] He competed at the funerary celebrations for Mausolos.[51] Only the Suda mentions his son, also called Theodektes who is said to have written an encomium for Alexander's uncle and brother-in-law, Alexander I of Epeiros.[52] Thus, it is uncertain on whose statue Alexander tossed garlands at Phaselis. His connection could have been with both of them, either because of the Karian connection to the Hekatomnids or because of the link to Aristotle or the family connection to the house of Epeiros.[53] In any case, Plutarch approves of Alexander's cheerfully honoring the statue of Theodektes. Another example for the appropriate way of treating cultural property in conquered territories is mentioned by Arrian:

> καὶ τὸ μνῆμα τοῦ Σαρδαναπάλου ἐγγὺς ἦν τῶν τειχῶν τῆς Ἀγχιάλου: καὶ αὐτὸς ἐφειστήκει ἐπ᾽ αὐτῷ Σαρδανάπαλος συμβεβληκὼς τὰς χεῖρας ἀλλήλαις ὡς μάλιστα ἐς κρότον συμβάλλονται, καὶ ἐπίγραμμα ἐπεγέγραπτο αὐτῷ Ἀσσύρια γράμματα: οἱ μὲν Ἀσσύριοι καὶ μέτρον ἔφασκον ἐπεῖναι τῷ ἐπιγράμματι,ὁ δὲ νοῦς ἦν αὐτῷ ὃν ἔφραζε τὰ ἔπη, ὅτι Σαρδανάπαλος ὁ Ἀνακυνδαράξου παῖς Ἀγχίαλον καὶ Ταρσὸν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ ἐδείματο. σὺ δέ, ὦ ξένε, ἔσθιε καὶ πῖνε καὶ παῖζε, ὡς τἆλλα τὰ ἀνθρώπινα οὐκ ὄντα τούτου ἄξια: τὸν ψόφον αἰνισσόμενος, ὅνπερ αἱ χεῖρες ἐπὶ τῷ κρότῳ ποιοῦσι: καὶ τὸ παῖζε ῥᾳδιουργότερον ἐγγεγράφθαι ἔφασαν τῷ Ἀσσυρίῳ ὀνόματι.
>
> "Sardanapalos' monument was near the walls of Anchialos; over it stood Sardanapalos himself, his hands joined just as if to clap, and an epitaph was inscribed in the Assyrian script; the Assyrians said that it was in verse. In any case its meaning according to the words was: 'Sardanapalos, son

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[49] Plut. *Alex*. 17.5. Trans. B. Perrin. Cf. Ma 2013, 76. He thinks that the statue might have been set up by Theodektes himself or by the city of Phaselis. See also Scholl, 1995: 229; Hamilton, 1969: 45.

[50] Cf. Tuplin, 2014; Önen, 2013; Weißenberger, 2002; Scholl, 1995: 229, n. 70, 73.

[51] Gell. 10.8.6; Suda s.v. Theodektes. Cf. Hornblower, 1982, 261: 334–336.

[52] Suda s.v. Theodektes. No other source differentiates between these two. Cf. Weißenberger, 2002.

[53] Tuplin, 2014 argues that father and son are options. Contra: Weißenberger, 2002 who argues in favor of the son. On the Argead Karian connection: Plut. *Alex*. 10.1–3; 22.4–5; Diod. 16.74.2.

> of Anakyndaraxes built Anchialos and Tarsos in one day; you, stranger, eat, drink and be merry, since other human things are not worth this' – the riddle referring to the noise of a hand-clap. It was said that the words 'be merry' had a less delicate original in the Assyrian."[54]

There is no reference to any damage the Macedonians did to this statue. Obviously, they looked at it, asked for a translation of the inscription and passed by leaving it unharmed. This is even more notable as the Greek artificial figure of the hedonistic king Sardanapalos was the prototype of the spoiled bad ruler *par excellence* and furthermore, the epitaph is characterized as indecent.[55] However, this seems to have been regarded as the correct way to behave regarding foreign cultural property: stop and stare, reflect about it, then pass by and leave it unharmed. Also other valuable Persian objects were said to have been spared and adopted by Alexander for his representation such as the famous golden vine and the equally famous golden plane tree referred to by several Greek authors.[56] As these decorations were integral elements of the Greek imagination of the Achaemenid court and the king's display of luxury, the Alexander historiographers probably thought that their audience expected them to mention these widely known artefacts. Being a moralist sneering at luxury, Phylarchos even mentions more than one golden plane-tree.[57] However, the evidence is blurred. It is unclear whether Great King used to sit under the golden plane tree holding court or whether it was displayed as a royal treasure.[58] Furthermore, it is uncertain whether the jewel-studded golden vine that, according to Alexander's chamberlain Chares of

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[54] Arr. *an*. 2.5.3–4. Trans. P.A. Brunt. Cf. Athen. 12.529 D–530 B. As for the general treatment of inscriptions of Eastern monarchs in Greek historiography, such references are mostly literary devices serving to stress the report's veracity, author's intense research or his experience as an eyewitness. The inscriptions cited are frequently lacking authentic features while instead being formed by traditional Greek stereotypes regarding the East. The alleged inscription of Sardanapalos' monument is such an example.

[55] On Sardanapalos see Fink 2014; Bernhardt, 2009; Lenfant, 2001.

[56] Hdt. 7.27; Xen. *Hell*. 7.1.38 (polemic). Cf. Kuhrt, 2010: 538; Weber, 2007: 248; Curtis, 2005: 55; Dusinberre, 2003: 83; Briant, 2002: 235–236; Pearson, 1960: 58, n. 34. The wealthy Lydian Pythios is said to have given it to Dareios I as a gift. The plane tree fits well in the Near Eastern tradition echoing the tree cult and the tree of life. Cf. Kuhrt, 2010: 538, n. 3; Briant, 2002: 235.

[57] Athen. 12.539 D.

[58] Cf. Kuhrt, 2010: 538. Cf. Athen. 12.514 B–C; 539 D.

Mytilene, sheltered the royal bed was the same as the famous golden vine Pythios gave to Dareios I.[59] As an eyewitness, Chares is not as good as his reputation. He showed some interest in Persian 'folklore' but adopted traditional Greek clichés on the decadent luxury of the Persian kings and Eastern 'barbarians' being allegedly addicted to luxury and alcohol.[60] Then again, Diodoros credits Antigonos with the discovery of the golden vine in the treasury of Susa.[61]

In any case, in Greek perspective as mirrored by the literary sources, the appropriate way to deal with foreign cultural property in wartimes was its conservation and treatment according to the moral code: Regarding the Persian cultural artefacts, the Macedonian conquerors were expected to be on their guard against the dangers of the seduction by Eastern luxury and vices. Ideally, they had to take the Persian riches as illustrative material in contrast to their own moderation. A well-known literary role model may have been the Herodotean Pausanias viewing the tent of Mardonios (before he was corrupted by the Eastern luxury).[62]

How to Behave Inappropriately: Macedonians and Cultural Property in the Conquered Cities (Part 2)

As the treatment of the cultural property of the conquered was used by Greek and Roman writers as a marker of the character development of the victors, it is not surprising that reports about the damages inflicted by the Macedonians on Persian items were used by them to moralize. In this context, an episode mentioned by Plutarch is rather noteworthy. He refers to the disrespectful treatment of a statue of Xerxes pulled over by plundering Macedonian soldiers. It is one of the rare testimonies concerning monumental Achaemenid free-standing round sculpture.[63] The impression of the Macedonian behavior is ambiguous. Plutarch tries to justify Alexander, their commander:

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[59] Athen. 12.514 E–F. The minor Alexander historiographer Amyntas confirms that the vine had bunches of grapes made of jewels. Cf. Pearson, 1960: 57.

[60] Persian 'folklore': *BNJ* 125 F 5. Clichés: *BNJ* 125 F 2 (Persian king's *tryphe*), F 17, F 19a (Indians love wine). Cf. Müller, 2014: 72.

[61] Diod. 19.48.6–7.

[62] Hdt. 9.82. On his later love for Persian wealth see Nep. 4.3.1–3. On Alexander resembling Pausanias: Just. 11.10.

[63] Cf. Razmjou, 2002: 89.

> Ξέρξου δὲ ἀνδριάντα μέγαν θεασάμενος ὑπὸ πλήθους τῶν ὠθουμένων εἰς τὰ βασίλεια πλημμελῶς ἀνατετραμμένον ἐπέστη, καὶ καθάπερ ἔμψυχον προσαγορεύσας, ‘πότερόν σε,’ εἶπε, ‘διὰ τὴν ἐπὶ τοὺς Ἕλληνας στρατείαν κείμενον παρέλθωμεν ἢ διὰ τὴν ἄλλην μεγαλοφροσύνην καὶ ἀρετὴν ἐγείρωμεν;’ τέλος δὲ πολὺν χρόνον πρὸς ἑαυτῷ γενόμενος καὶ σιωπήσας παρῆλθε.
>
> “On beholding a great statue of Xerxes which had been carelessly overthrown by a throng that forced its way into the palace, Alexander stopped before it, and accosting it as if it had been alive, said: ‘Shall I pass on and leave thee lying there, because of thine expedition against the Hellenes, or, because of thy magnanimity and virtue in other ways, shall I set thee up again?’ But finally, after communing with himself a long time in silence, he passed on.”[64]

Hence, Plutarch excuses Alexander by saying that he did not order the statue to be toppled. Rather, it seems to have happened by accident when the soldiers crowded into the palace. In addition, according to Plutarch, Alexander did not participate in the looting but wanders around contemplating and debating with himself (like a philosopher). In this interior monologue, Alexander ponders on how to evaluate the memory of Xerxes correctly. In the end, the panhellenic colours predominate, thus legitimating his decision. Hence, Plutarch makes this violent act of damage done to this item of Persian culture and Alexander’s decision to refrain from setting it up again, appear as appropriate and justified. According to Judith Mossman, the whole episode was worked up with tragic Herodotean undertones by Plutarch: Alexander who empathetically commemorates Xerxes’ fate encounters the tragic king himself who wept at the ephemeral nature of his great army.[65] The statue’s thorough identification with the portrayed person in Plutarch’s way of thinking is mirrored by another anecdote in his *Life of Alexander*:

> τὸ δὲ ὅλον οὕτω φασὶ δεινὸν ἐνδῦναι καὶ δεισοποιὸν ἐγγενέσθαι τῇ ψυχῇ τοῦ Κασάνδρου τὸ δέος, ὥστε ὕστερον χρόνοις πολλοῖς, ἤδη Μακεδόνων βασιλεύοντα καὶ κρατοῦντα τῆς Ἑλλάδος, ἐν Δελφοῖς περιπατοῦντα καὶ θεώμενον τοὺς ἀνδριάντας, εἰκόνος Ἀλεξάνδρου φανείσης, ἄφνω πληγέντα φρῖξαι καὶ κραδανθῆναι τὸ σῶμα καὶ μόλις ἀναλαβεῖν ἑαυτόν, ἰλιγγιάσαντα πρὸς τὴν ὄψιν.

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[64] Plut. *Alex*. 37.3. Trans. B. Perrin.

[65] Cf. Mossman, 1988: 92–93. See Hdt. 7.46.

> "And in general, as we are told, Kassander's spirit was deeply penetrated and imbued with a dreadful fear of Alexander, so that many years afterwards, when he was now king of Macedonia and master of Greece, as he was walking about and surveying the statues at Delphi, the sight of an image of Alexander smote him suddenly with a shuddering and trembling from which he could scarcely recover, and made his head swim."[66]

Obviously, the story served to stress the hostility between Kassander and Alexander. It might have originated with pro-Antigonid unfavorable reports depicting Kassander as a weak, fearful coward.[67] However, Plutarch who was influenced by the theories of physiognomy and aimed at drawing literary portraits of his protagonists' characters knew how to use references to real artwork to this end. Concerning Plutarch's episode on Alexander and the statue of Xerxes, Razmjou resumes: "Whether or not this episode actually happened is relatively unimportant (…) It reveals a sense of how the story (…) was used by Plutarch describing a *type* of event (…) portraying a believable idea about Alexander's ethos as a conqueror toward images of the Persian kings".[68] However, it has to be stressed that this is a Greek literary idea focused on the image of Xerxes portrayed as the arch-enemy of Greek freedom and autonomy. It does not reflect the Macedonian attitude towards all of the Persian kings, especially not towards Kyros II. If Plutarch's story is more than a moral lesson, Elspeth Dusinberre may be right assuming that the overturned statue of Xerxes may have been made of stone.[69] Otherwise, given its material value, the soldiers (and Alexander) would supposedly not have passed it by carelessly. However, despite its apologetic tone, the anecdote also mirrors the ruthless treatment of the Persian cultural property in Persepolis as attested by the other literary sources and confirmed by the archaeological evidence.[70] The city was not captured by force. Rather, it was handed over to the Macedonians by Tiridates, the commander of the Persepolis garrison, who was therefore confirmed in his office.[71] The troops stayed in Persepolis for four months. The stay seems to have started with a great plundering, looting and massacre in order to satisfy the troops and ended with the programmatic

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66 Plut. *Alex*. 74.4. Trans. B. Perrin.

67 Cf. Landucci Gattinoni 2017: 274.

68 Razmjou, 2002: 98.

69 Dusinberre, 2003: 82–83.

70 Curt. 5.6.1–10; Diod. 17.70. Cf. Schmidt, 1939.

71 Cf. Wiesehöfer, 1994: 34–35.

conflagration of certain parts of the royal palace, particularly connected with Xerxes.[72] The intention of this destruction is still debated. The assumption that it was addressed to the Greeks as a marker of the accomplishment of Alexander's (alleged) panhellenic mission is no contradiction to the hypothesis that it was a sign of return to the tradition of the Teispids, thus representing Alexander as the new Kyros.[73] It could have meant both.

However, destroying the cultural property of the defeated (who even had surrendered to the conquerors) was just not the right behaviour for a civilized commander. Greek literary tradition attributed such a kind of vandalism to the Persian "barbarians". This might explain why Kleitarchos did his best to paint the story in the most panhellenic colours and also why Arrian felt so uneasy trying to explain Alexander's behaviour. His account on the Macedonian stay in Persepolis is very brief.[74] In contrast to Arrian who portrays Alexander in a most idealized way, Curtius, Diodoros and Strabo give much fuller accounts of the scenes of violence in Persepolis. Depicting Alexander as a rapidly depraving victim of fortune, especially Curtius used the conflagration as a symptomatic marker of his negative moral development and the Macedonian treatment of artworks in Persepolis as a sign of their depravity.[75] He shows them as the "true barbarians" going berserk at the sight of the treasures. Falling victim to insatiable greed, they display the most uncivilized manner ripping statues from their bases and not only stealing works of art but hacking them to pieces in order to carry them off:

> (…) urbis huius divitiae vicere praeterita. In hanc Persidis opes congesserant barbari (…) Itaque inter ipsos victores ferro dimicabatur; pro hoste erat, qui pretiosiorem occupaverat praedam (…) dolabris pretiosae artis vasa caedebant, nihil neque intactum erat neque integrum ferebatur, abrupta simulacrorum membra, ut quisque avellerat, trahebat.
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> "(…) the riches of this city surpassed all that had gone before. Into it the barbarians had heaped the wealth of all Persia (…) Hence the victors themselves fought with one another with the steel; he was regarded as a

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[72] Cf. Mousavi, 2012: 61–65; Wiesehöfer, 1994: 36–40. Gauer, 1991: 44 calls it "eine schlimme Konzession an den Chauvinismus seiner griechischen Verbündeten". The city was not entirely destroyed, cf. Diod. 19.22. See also Mousavi, 2002: 212.

[73] For an overview see Mousavi, 2012: 65–67. On the latter hypothesis see Briant, 2010: 110–111; Nawotka, 2003: 75; Wiesehöfer, 1994: 36. Cf. also Müller, 2014: 191–192.

[74] Arr. *an*. 3.18.10.

[75] Curt. 5.7.1–7. On Curtius' image of Alexander see Müller, 2014: 135–144.

> foeman who had been first to seize a more precious prize (…) they broke with mattocks vases of priceless art, nothing was left uninjured and carried off whole, each one carried the broken limbs of statues as he had torn them off."[76]

By using the treatment of cultural legacy as a moral code, Curtius makes plain that the Macedonians lost their morals: A rude bunch controlled by avarice, they were only interested in the material value of the artworks.[77] Due to the Greek commemoration of the Persian sack of the Akropolis, in the ancient collective memory, the damaging of statues evoked associations with this event and was therefore perceived as an uncivilized activity.[78] Thus, the Macedonians were characterized as the "new Persians". In the case of Curtius, this judgment is especially remarkable as plundering and publicly displaying the defeated enemy's treasures in triumphal processions formed part of the Roman tradition. Regarding the case of the treatment of the enemy's artworks in wartime, the traditional Greek judgements as adopted by Curtius in this passage were not compatible with the Roman patterns of behaviour. Curtius makes use of them anyway as a marker of the Macedonian depravation. Also Diodoros, usually not being one of the critics of Alexander and his Macedonians, reports that the Macedonians gave themselves up to an orgy of plunder fighting with each other for the Persian riches, greedily cutting through them with their swords and even chopping the hands of their rivals off.[79] However, Diodoros' information is valuable, obviously coming from a reliable source: The report is confirmed by the archaeological evidence. In the ruins of Persepolis, the Macedonians left visible traces of this reckless looting. The conflagration was preceded by the careful removal of all the valuable objects.[80] "The pillagers took what was most valuable and easily carried off",[81] while items not found

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[76] Curt. 5.6.3–5. Trans. J. C. Rolfe.

[77] In the late Roman republic, Sallust (*Cat*. 11.5–6) voiced a different view of the appropriate attitude of soldiers concerning works of art. He criticized that in Asia, soldiers have become affected by decadence and thus began to look at statues. Cf. Pekáry, 2002: 17–30.

[78] Cf. Kousser, 2009: 274. Perhaps, Curtius even thought that there were also Greek artworks stored in the treasury of Susa damaged by the Macedonians.

[79] Diod. 17.70.1–6. Cf. Razmjou, 2002: 98; Cahill, 1985: 374.

[80] Cf. Schmidt, 1939: 16–17.

[81] Mousavi, 2012: 60.

worthwhile were smashed and burnt.[82] According to the excavation report from 1939, the Macedonians "were thorough in cleaning out the treasure house of Persepolis"[83] robbing all that was precious: "They do not seem to have left a single vessel of precious metal; but the royal tableware of stone would have burdened their baggage train without bringing much gain. We have no doubt that they smashed hundreds of vessels which they did not care to tale along".[84] The results of the excavation provide us with a shocking impression of destruction: The Macedonians smashed about 600 vessels from a great variety of stones including alabaster, marble and lapis lazuli. "It is a perplexing question why these vessels were so deliberately and systematically smashed", states Nicholas Cahill who argues in favor of "sheer vandalism".[85] The troops also damaged and scattered sculptures, seals and signet rings, jewelry, precious stones, cloth decorations through the halls of the treasury and the courtyard complex.[86] The few coins that were found buried under the accumulating debris were probably dropped from the plunder and escaped the soldiers' attention while they were grabbing all that was valuable.[87] In contrast to the literary praise of Alexander's respect towards Persian sacred items, sacred objects once used in a ritual ceremony were also damaged and burnt.[88] Some of them will have been recognizable as such even for foreigners, for example the seal depicting two priests performing a ceremony beside a fire altar.[89]

In addition, the invaders did not only damage Achaimenid artefacts. The "Penelope from Persepolis" lay scattered in fragments (a headless torso and a damaged right hand) in the ruins of the treasury.[90] As Olga

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[82] Cf. Cahill, 1985: 380.

[83] Schmidt, 1939: 71.

[84] Schmidt, 1939: 55. A number of these smashed vessels and tableware were inscribed "Xerxes the Great King". Cf. Codella, 2008: 34, n. 19; Cahill, 1985: 383. Mousavi, 2012: 60, n. 8 adds that two silver vessels excavated in 1942 may have escaped the Macedonians' attention.

[85] Cahill, 1985: 383. The vessels were not smashed as part of the ceremony in which they were used. In addition, it is improbable that the soldiers smashed them in order to remove any precious decoration or because of any iconoclastic impulse.

[86] Cf. Razmjou, 2002: 89; Schmidt, 1939: 65–82.

[87] Cf. Cahill, 1985: 383.

[88] Cf. Curtis, 2005: 55.

[89] Cf. Cahill, 1985: 382.

[90] Cf. Palagia, 2008: 223; Kawami, 1986: 259–260; Cahill, 1985: 383; Schmidt, 1939: 65–67.

Palagia states, it "is interesting that the obvious Greek provenance of the statue did not save it from destruction".[91] Werner Gauer thinks that the statue was deliberately destroyed by the Macedonians who chopped off the head, arms and legs.[92] However, his assumption that this was an act motivated by ideological reasons (as the statue may perhaps symbolize a Ionian city's longing for the liberation from the Athenian dominion by the Persians) is not convincing. All the damage and destruction seems to mirror the rampant actions of a marauding soldiery given permission to recoup for an exhausting and hard campaign. Probably excited, triumphant, eager to grub the most they could and unbridled, they rushed through the treasuries leaving a scene of destruction behind without any ideological purpose. Rather, the fragmentation of the "Penelope" matches Curtius' and Diodoros' description that the soldiers tried to cut some of the valuable artefacts into pieces in order to be able to transport them. The find of an iron saw blade in the treasury may illustrate what instruments of pillage were used.[93] Assumedly, the life-size statue of the "Penelope" was regarded as too heavy to carry it off completely. Thus, the soldiers took the head, legs and arms. In consequence, the damage was motivated by greed and practical considerations, not by ideology.[94]

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[91] Palagia, 2008: 223.

[92] Cf. Gauer, 1991: 38.

[93] Cf. Schmidt, 1939: 82.

[94] Razmjou, 2002: 92 suggests that, in contrary to the literary evidence, the Macedonian conquest of Susa was as violent and destructive as that of Persepolis. His assumption is based on the close examination of the varied forms of damage inflicted on the colossal granite statue of Dareios I, probably made in Egypt (as the Egyptian inscription refers to Atum of Heliopolis), found at the Gate of Dareios at Susa: "The archaeological record tells a different story; the statue of Darius is part of that story." He points out that the statue shows multiple deep hacking marks and other damages: "Episodes of wanton casual violence against the image in the guise of target practice by bow and arrow, spear, and sword seem to have occurred while the statue was still whole" (Razmjou, 2002: 97). He also argues that the blows that damaged the cartouche were ideologically motivated and caused by someone from Alexander's entourage who was familiar with Egyptian hieroglyphs. However, this seems to be very far-fetched. First of all, it is not clear whether the damages were done by the Macedonians under Alexander at all. Second, even assuming that this might have been the case, these actions were not necessarily ideologically motivated. Marauding soldiers given permission to plunder, pillage, and enjoy themselves, perhaps drunken and reveling, may have had fun shooting arrows and spears at the monumental statues in the conquered palace without the intention of uttering a political statement. Thus, Razmjou's argument is tempting but speculative.

The theme of how to treat the opponent's statues appropriately also occurs in the literary evidence on Alexander's Successors. A significant anecdote is to be set in the context of the expulsion of Kassander's protégé Demetrios of Phaleron who acted as his supervisor in Athens from 317-307 BC, an era he later on glorified and justified in his lost treatise *On the Ten Years*:

> Δημήτριος Φανοστράτου Φαληρεύς. οὗτος ἤκουσε μὲν Θεοφράστου: δημηγορῶν δὲ παρ᾽ Ἀθηναίοις τῆς πόλεως ἐξηγήσατο ἔτη δέκα, καὶ εἰκόνων ἠξιώθη χαλκῶν ἑξήκοντα πρὸς ταῖς τριακοσίαις, ὧν αἱ πλείους ἐφ᾽ ἵππων ἦσαν καὶ ἁρμάτων καὶ συνωρίδων, συντελεσθεῖσαι ἐν οὐδὲ τριακοσίαις ἡμέραις: τοσοῦτον ἐσπουδάσθη (…) Σφόδρα δὲ λαμπρὸς ὢν παρὰ τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις, ὅμως ἐπεσκοτήθη καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπὸ τοῦ τὰ πάντα διεσθίοντος φθόνου. ἐπιβουλευθεὶς γὰρ ὑπό τινων δίκην θανάτου οὐ παρὼν ὤφλεν. οὐ μὴν ἐκυρίευσαν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἰὸν ἀπήρυγον εἰς τὸν χαλκόν, κατασπάσαντες αὐτοῦ τὰς εἰκόνας καὶ τὰς μὲν ἀποδόμενοι, τὰς δὲ βυθίσαντες, τὰς δὲ κατακόψαντες εἰς ἀμίδας: λέγεται γὰρ καὶ τοῦτο. μία δὲ μόνη σώζεται ἐν ἀκροπόλει. Φαβωρῖνος δέ φησιν ἐν Παντοδαπῇ ἱστορίᾳ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι τοὺς Ἀθηναίους Δημητρίου κελεύσαντος τοῦ βασιλέως.
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> "Demetrius, the son of Phanostratos, was a native of Phaleron. He was a pupil of Theophrastos, but by his speeches in the Athenian assembly he held the chief power in the State for ten years and was decreed 360 bronze statues, most of them representing him either on horseback or else driving a chariot or a pair of horses. And these statues were completed in less than 300 days, so much was he esteemed (…) For all his popularity with the Athenians he nevertheless suffered eclipse through all-devouring envy. Having been indicted by some persons on a capital charge, he let judgment go by default; and, when his accusers could not get hold of his person, they disgorged their venom on the bronze of his statues. These they tore down from their pedestals; some were sold, some cast into the sea, and others were even, it is said, broken up to make bedroom-utensils. Only one is preserved in the Acropolis. In his *Miscellaneous History* Favorinos tells us that the Athenians did this at the bidding of King Demetrios."[95]

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[95] Diog. Laert. 5.75–77 (= *BNJ* 228 T 1). Trans. R. D. Hicks. Cf. Nep. 1.6; Strab. 9.1.20 ("Some people even state that they were transformed into chamber pots."); Plut. *Mor*. 820 E. Cf. Azoulay 2009; Pekáry, 2002: 129. The bronze statues of Demetrios were decreed for his merits for the Athenians and set up in Athens. They were a prominent subject in ancient literature. Their number ranges from 300 (Nep. *Milt*. 6; Plut. *Mor*. 820 E) to more than 300 (Strab. 9.1.20), 360 (Plin. *NH* 34.27) and even 1500 (Dio Chrys.

In ancient sources, there is frequent mention of a mob going wild and tearing down the statues of politicians who had fallen from grace. However, a political leader who ordered it and even sought to transform the former opponent's statues into chamber pots was not regarded as an ideal role model. Such a rude behavior served as a literary device to blacken his portrait. Thus, not surprisingly, one of the "usual suspects" concerning bad behavior among Hellenistic rulers, Demetrios Poliorketes with his notoriously ruined reputation in the literary sources,[96] is blamed for this. The story will have been slander.[97] Pekáry points out that the claim in times of war that the opponent's statues made of bronze were destroyed in order to recycle the material became a literary *topos*.[98] Comparably, after the elimination of the Attic orator Demades and his son ordered by either Kassander or his father Antipatros,[99] the Athenians were said to have melted down Demades' statues to make chamber pots.[100]

Results

It seems that the Greek, Macedonian and Roman depiction of the Persians, especially of Xerxes and his troops, as plundering thieves and devastators of Greek cultural property was first and foremost a propagandistic device highlighted and reactivated in times of wars against the East. The theme, closely connected to the claim of restoration of specific artefacts, served particularly to commemorate the own victories against these "barbarians" who allegedly committed these wrongs. Strikingly, the theme is very predominant in the time of the Second Sophistic, when the commemoration of the past hegemony of Athens and the bloom of Greece in general, inextricably connected with the Greek victories against the Persians, constituted a key factor of the construction of Greek intellectual self-identity under Roman rule. Furthermore, the image of the ruthless Persians threatening "Western" cultural heritage also suited the Roman propaganda against the Parthians who were equated with the Persians. This explains the special impact of the traditional Greek image of the

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Korinth. 37.41). See Sollenberger, 2000: 318; Tracy, 2000: 333. The number is clearly exaggerated. Cf. Martini, 1901: 2820.

96 Cf. Wheatley 2012; Müller 2010; Wheatley 2003.

97 Cf. Tracy, 2000: 334.

98 Cf. Pekáry, 2002: 129.

99 Arr. *Succ*. 1.14.

100 Plut. *Mor*. 820f.

Persian thieves and plunderers in the Second Sophistic. It is not so much about the Persians but reveals certain strategies of constructing identity in imperial times. The ancient literary reports on Persian booty restored by the Macedonian benefactors cannot be taken at face value. In fact, much of the artefacts they may have given back will have been importations, gifts, and tributes, not booty. However, after such a long time, it will have been hard to know for the Macedonians and the Greeks.

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"Who Created this Earth, Who Created Yonder Heaven, Who Created Man" – The Understanding of Creation in Old Persian Royal Inscriptions and the Old Testament

Susanne Rudnig-Zelt

The conviction that one god created heaven, earth and humans belongs to the bedrock of all contemporary monotheistic religions. Christians, Jews, Muslims, Zoroastrians and many others would agree on it. It has even become a common notion among educated Westerners, whether they adhere to a religion or not. If European atheists had to define the idea of creation they would probably describe it thus: The one and only god created heaven, earth and mankind. One could call this concept "the monotheistic[1] idea of creation".

The origin of this idea of creation is usually attributed to the Bible or more precisely to the Old Testament. It is there, that most educated Westerners would look for the quotation mentioned in the title of this contribution "Who Created this Earth, Who Created Yonder Heaven, Who Created Man"[2]. However, this text does not come from the Bible and it does not refer to the biblical god YHWH. The god described here is the Persian main god Ahuramazdā,[3] and the relative clauses are part of a standard formula found at the beginning of many Old Persian Royal

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[1] The concept of monotheism is in itself of course a difficult and much debated issue. The perceived monotheism of the biblical and Old Persian texts has been an important *movens* to look for Persian influences in biblical traditions – or to deny them (Ahn, 1994: IX. 62–85.; Blenkinsopp, 2011: 503f.). However, neither the Old Testament nor the Old Persian texts are monotheistic in the sense, that no other gods or celestial beings apart from the main god exist (s. below; Ahn, 1992: 102–107; 193–195; 221–227; Antonioz, 2017: 36 and Rudnig-Zelt, 2015: 256f.; 2016a: 11f. 26).

[2] Schmitt, 2000: 30.

[3] The reading of the name follows Schmitt, 2014a: 143.

Inscriptions from Dareios I. to Artaxerxes II.[4] The relationship between these ideas about creation and biblical traditions must be explained. Did the authors of biblical texts draw on Persian influences when they thought about creation? Who was really the first to utter the monotheistic idea of creation, biblical or Old Persian scribes?

The Old Persian formula always stands at the beginning of the Royal inscription it occurs in, preceded only by the statement that Ahuramazdā is a great god. Then several relative clauses describe Ahuramazdā. According to DNa (and a.o. DSe, DSf, DE), Ahuramazdā has done/created[5] heaven, earth and man. Another work of Ahuramazdā, that has not become a part of modern notions, follows: "who created blissfull happiness (*šiyati-*) for man"[6] Ahuramazdā's next work would even provoke modern readers like it did their Greek forefathers: "who made Darius, Xerxes etc. king, the one king of many, the one master of many".[7]

The last work, which is so difficult to accept for modern educated Westerners is an important clue for the background of the Old Persian ideas about creation. Their authors wanted to justify the rule of one Achaemenid king over many people and they pleaded to the allegiance of the reader to this ruler and his empire (DNa 56–60). The formula is part of the Royal and Imperial Ideology (or Theology) of the Persian Empire.

Like the Achaemenid Royal and Imperial Ideology as a whole, these statements have parallels and even roots in Ancient Near Eastern notions about creation.[8] They differ from the Mesopotamian parallels in three aspects. In Mesopotamia creation is not always linked with kingship among people.[9]

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4 Ahn, 1992: 180.186; Herrenschmidt, 1977: 19.

5 S. Kent, 1953: 188. "Create" is the translation Rüdiger Schmitt chooses in his edition of the inscriptions (2000: 30). In his *Wörterbuch* he translates "machen/schaffen" (2014a, 160f.). S. also Ahn, 1998: 25f.

6 Schmitt, 2000: 30; 2014a: 248. Whether this alludes to Zoroastrian theology in the sense that Ahuramazdā made good things only (Boyce, 1982: 120) remains open to debate.

7 Schmitt, 2000: 30. DNa represents the final version of the formula that was developed during the reign of Darius I. (Herrenschmidt, 1977: 35–39). Whether the king was created or installed by Ahuramazdā cannot be derived from the formula. Schmitt, 2014a: 201, seems to hint in the direction of "install".

8 Ahn, 1992: 192; Schmitt, 2014b: 203–205.

9 For example the famous Babylonian creation epic Enuma Elish is very much concerned with Marduk's position as king of the universe and the other gods (e.g. tablet IV,14f.; tablet VI, 99, s. also the ancient title of the epic: "Lied von Marduk, der Tiamatu vernichtete und das Königtum annahm" (Zgoll, 2012: 23), but it is not interested in a

Further, unlike in many Mesopotamian and also Egyptian texts[10] theogony is not part of the creation "narrative" in the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions. This might have to do with Ahuramazdā's dominant position among the gods. Since he is the only god of real interest, one need not discuss the origin of other gods.[11]

The last difference is a consequence of the second. In Mesopotamia Creation is the combined effort of different deities, while in the Old Persian Royal Inscription Ahuramazdā is the only creator.[12] The divine cooperation in Mesopotamia implies a separation of the creation of the world and the creation of all mankind at the beginning of the world.[13] From a Babylonian or Assyrian perspective, creating heaven and earth is one divine work, creating humans is another.[14] The creation of humankind is mostly attributed to one or several mother goddesses, to the mother goddess(es) and Ea, or to Ea alone.[15] The creator of the universe is usually Enlil or Anu.[16]

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human ruler. Though the authors of this text see Babylon and its temple as the center of the world (tablet VI, 51–73), they have no such claims for the Babylonian king, at least not explicitly. But other texts among the manifold Mesopotamian concepts of creation give the king a prominent role, e.g. a Neobabylonian myth, in which the king is created as wise leader after lullû-man, the ancestor of humankind in general (Mayer, 1987: 57. 64–68).

[10] In the so-called "Denkmal memphitischer Theologie", Ptah appears as the only creator like Ahuramazdā or YHWH, yet the works the text is most interested in are other gods (Keel / Schroer, 2002: 171–173. 255–257). Cp. Enuma Elish tablet I.

[11] The Babylonian version of DNa emphasizes this by calling Ahuramazdā the god of the gods (ilu ilāni, Weißbach, 1911: 87).

[12] Zgoll, 2012: 36.

[13] Like the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions this contribution focuses mainly on the primordial creation of all mankind, not on the creation of an individual person or king. As Albertz has pointed out, both types of creation must be considered seperately in the Ancient Near East (1974: 81–90). So for example the epic of Gilgamesh is not further considered here. It does not portray the creation of mankind, but the creation of Enkidu.

[14] Ahn, 1999: 252.This separation is so strictly observed, that almost all texts treat either the creation of the universe or the origins of humankind. Thus Keel and Schroer can deal separately with cosmogonic and anthropogonic traditions (2002: 136–190; Albertz, 1974: 54–150).

[15] Zgoll, 2012: 40–49 Marduk's wife Zarpanitu or Ištar can also be creators of humans (Albertz, 1974: 57f.).

[16] Krebernik, 2012: 79f.; Zgoll, 2012: 41; Hartenstein, 2013: 395. In Enuma Elish Marduk takes over Enlil's task as creator of the universe. He builds heaven and earth from the

The Old Testament texts about creation display similarities with the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions, but even more so with the Mesopotamian Creation myths. The parallel to the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions is the position of the main god. Like Ahuramazdā, YHWH has become the only powerful god. Therefore in the Old Testament as in the inscriptions there is no need for theogony, and creation cannot be seen as divine cooperation. This eminent position of YHWH as the main god was present in the Old Testament before any Persian influences could be felt. This basic assumption for the later monotheistic idea of creation is therefore no result of Persian influences.

Yet the manner in which creation is depicted in the Old Testament, finds a closer parallel in the patterns of Mesopotamian myths, rather than in the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions. Creation of humans and creation of the universe are both attributed to YHWH in the Old Testament, but they are still kept separate. There are only very few texts, that are as explicit as DNa: "who created this earth, who created yonder heaven, who created man". Rather YHWH is mostly shown either as the creator of man or as the creator of heaven and earth. It is not denied that he created both the world and its inhabitants, but the texts usually mention only one aspect, i.e. either the world or the living beings.[17]

In some Psalms YHWH is seen as the creator of the universe.[18] If humans appear, they just exist and their origin is not further explained (s.Ps 74:12–17; 89:10–15 and also Prov 8:22–31; Hi 38f.; 40f.; Neh 9:6).[19] This even holds true for late and sophisticated hymns like Ps 8 and Ps 104.

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slaughtered Tiamat (tablet V). But even the authors of Enuma Elish with their interest in Marduk's supreme power cannot turn him into the creator of mankind. This remains Ea's task. Marduk talks to Ea about his intention to create humans (tablet VI, 4–8) and about humankind's position in creation, but Ea knows how to do it and does it "mit der Kunstfertigkeit Marduks" (Kämmerer / Metzler, 2012: 254). There are however a few texts where Marduk creates humankind (Albertz, 1974: 57; Zgoll, 2012: 40).

17 Albertz explains the separation of the creation of the universe and the creation of man as belonging to different genres. The creation of the universe appears in hymns and the creation of man in laments. Yet he concedes that this only applies to the motif of the individual creation. The creation of humankind in general has its place in hymns, too (1974: 81–150).

18 Kratz / Spieckermann, 1999: 266.

19 The same pattern can be observed in Egyptian hymns to the sun(god): humans appears among the animals, and it is not mentioned how humans were made (s. Keel / Schroer, 2000: 159–162. 250–254).

In this regard Ps 8:4 portrays YHWH as the creator of heaven. In v. 6f. YHWH is concerned about man's rank, but it is not told that he makes him[20] and in v. 3 babies occur, but their origin is not described. The same pattern appears in Ps 104. The hymn explains in detail, how YHWH made heaven and earth (vv.2–9) and that he nourishes man and animals (v. 10–28). But it is not said, how humans and most animals came into existence. It is only mentioned, that YHWH formed the great sea monster Leviathan (v.26), and when v.24 says that YHWH did all his works in wisdom, this might include humankind and animals. Yet the hymn does not explain how YHWH accomplished that.

The famous non-P account of creation and fall in Gen 2:4b–3:24 works the other way round. Here YHWH makes animals, man and woman – but the world just exists. That he makes it, too, is only mentioned in a later addition in 2:4b.[21] This focus on the creation of humankind is widespread in the Old Testament, especially in wisdom literature and Psalms (e.g. Dtn 4:32; 26:19; Is 17:7; Jer 38:16; Ps 33:14f.; 86:9; 89:48; 119:73; 139:13–16; Hi 4:17; 10:3.8–12; 14:15; 31:15; 32:22; 33: 4.6; 34:14f.; 35:10f.; 36:3; Prov 16:4; Koh 7:29; 12:1).[22] For example it can be found in some older proverbs. There, YHWH appears as the creator of all humans, whether rich or poor (Prov 14:31; 17:5; 22:2; 29:13; Hi 34:19) or as the one, who has made eye or ear (Prov 20:12; 29:13). But one need not talk about the origin of the world in these sayings.[23]

Also in Deutero-Isaiah or Second Isaiah (Is 40–55), where YHWH's ability to create proves his capacity to redeem his people from punishment

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[20] Though Albertz seems to imply this (1974: 122–126) v. 5 does not describe the making of humankind, but how YHWH takes care of humankind.

[21] The style of this addition closely resembles the younger Priestly account in Gen 1:1–2,4a. Besides, the inverted verbal clause in v. 5 clearly is an older beginning following the scheme of Enuma Elish: "when … was not yet there" (s. Enuma Elish tablet I, Z. 1f.). V. 4b was added to connect the two accounts of creation Gen 1:1–2:4a and Gen 2:5–3:24 and to harmonize them (Levin, 1993: 89; Kratz, 2000: 254; for a different view s. Gunkel, 1922: 5).

[22] S. Kratz, 1991: 108f. In the Septuagint version of Deut 32:8f. and also 4QDeut Elyon is seen as the one, who separates (and creates) all people, distributes them each to their god and gives Israel to YHWH (s. also Gen 14:19.22). But the question must be asked whether Elyon is an independent deity at all and not an epithet for other gods like YHWH, El or Baal (Elnes / Miller, 1999: 294–298; Rudnig-Zelt, 2016b: 325–327).

[23] S. Kratz / Spieckermann, 1999: 274.

and exile,[24] most texts follow this pattern. YHWH is either the creator of the universe or of his people or humankind in general.

Especially in older texts in Deutero-Isaiah YHWH is the creator of the universe and reigns over humans and their history. But the creation of these humans is not of interest (e.g. Is 40:12–26).[25] On the other hand, some texts focus on the creation of humankind (Is 45:10f.) or declare, that YHWH makes his people Israel (e.g. 43:1.7.15.21; 44:2.21; 45:11; 54:4 s. also Hos 8:14)[26], but only in a few verses both motifs are linked with the creation of the world (e.g. the creation of Israel in Is 44:24; 51:13.16). Since Is 44:24; 51:13.16 do not deal with the creation of mankind in general, but with a kind of individual creation, they will not be further considered here.[27]

After all, the separation of the creation of humankind and the creation of the universe is deeply rooted both in Ancient Near Eastern and biblical Traditions. One last trace of this separation might be seen in the Apostolic Creed, which announces that god, the father, is creator of heaven and earth without mentioning humans or animals.[28]

Yet there are a few Old Testament texts that like the Old Persian inscriptions combine both aspects of creation. One of them is the Priestly account of creation in Gen 1:1–2:4b. And there are two texts in Deutero-Isaiah, which explicitly attribute to YHWH the creation of heaven and earth as well as man: Is 42:5 and 45:12f. (s. also the younger Jer 27:5; Sach 12:1).

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[24] Rendtorff, 1954: 9–13 This is already true for the oldest texts of the collection (Kratz, 1991: 148–157).

[25] Kratz, 1991: 47–52. 150. 217. This pattern is kept in younger texts, too, like Is 48:13 (Kratz, 1991: 175). Even texts that proclaim: "YHWH makes it all" give as examples heaven and earth (Is 44:24) or components of them like light and darkness, evil and wellbeing (Is 45:7). Is 45:18 assumes a position like Ps 104. The verse praises YHWH as creator of heaven and earth, who formed the earth "to live there". But it is not said, who lives there, animals, people in general or Israel, and how these living beings are made.

[26] The verbs used are ברא ,יצר (only 43:1) and עשה.

[27] Considering the Ancient Near Eastern parallels, it is more plausible that the motif of the creation of Israel is an application of the creation of the individual or the king rather than an application of the creation of mankind in general (Vermeylen, 1987: 221f. 238).

[28] Herrenschmidt, 1977: 17f. observes that even Scholars engaged in Iranian studies are influenced by this pattern. They focus on the creation of the world and tend to overlook the creation of humans.

All three texts can be dated within the Persian era. Gen 1:1–2:4b is the beginning of the Priestly Code (P), a formerly independent writing that became incorporated into a collection of narratives and laws that is now the Pentateuch.[29] The composition of P should be connected with the Second Temple, which was built under Darius I. P was probably written to (re-) affirm the importance of this temple after its completion around 515 BC.[30]

Is 45:12f. deals with Cyrus, as we shall see, but was hardly written during his reign. In his thorough analysis of Second Isaiah R. G. Kratz attributes both Is 45:12f. and 42:5 to one layer of texts, the so-called "Kyros-Ergänzungsschicht".[31] This group of texts completes older

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[29] Römer, 2014: 70–73. 90–93. 118f. As widely acknowledged there are also Mesopotamian and Egyptian influences at work in Gen 1:1–2:4a (Neumann-Gorsolke, 2004: 177–185; Schellenberg, 2011: 99–113). Rüterswörden rightly points out, that the Achaemenid Court was a melting pot of such concepts from Egypt and Mesopotamia, so that especially the much elder Egyptian influences might have reached the Old Testament via Persian transmission (Rüterswörden, 1993: 122–126). It is even possible, that the Egyptian idea of the king as image of the main God appealed to Persian kings, too, as the Egyptian inscriptions on the statue of Darius from Susa might show (Neumann-Gorsolke, 2004: 179–181).

[30] Blenkinsopp, 2011: 497f.; Kratz, 2013a: 160–162.

[31] Duhm, 1968: 313–315. 343f.; Albertz, 1974: 12.24f.; Kratz, 1991: 108–113. It might be discussed, if 45:12f. and 42:5 are part of a discrete layer, since they both differ from the remaining text on creation in the Kyros-Ergänzungsschicht Is 48:13, which is only concerned with the creation of heaven and earth. Other scholars attribute Is 45:12 to Second Isaiah himself, who is usually seen as a contemporary of Cyrus (s. e.g. Smith, 1963: 417; van Oorschot, 1993: 81–104). Blenkinsopp even denies any influence of the creation formula from the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions on Second Isaiah, because he was a contemporary of Cyrus, and the formula was developed only under Darius (s. above; Blenkinsopp, 2011: 502–506).There are, however, no convincing arguments for such an early dating of this text and other Cyrus oracles. It cannot be said with certainty that those oracles were written before the conquest of Babylon in 539 BC, since Cyrus did not act as expected and worshiped YHWH (Smith, 1963: 417f.; Vermeylen, 1987: 189. 203; Werlitz, 1999: 176; Albani, 2000: 101f.). The postulated relationship between Cyrus and YHWH might be just the Judean adaption of Persian Imperial Ideology and Babylonian Marduk Theology (Albani, 2000: 91–102) where an exchange of the gods could happen without further explanations (s. below), and without the expectation that the Great king would really grow attached to the own god. A similar phenomenon appears in the inscriptions of Darius on a statue in Suez. The Egyptian version of the inscriptions present Darius as pharaoh worshipping the Egyptian deities, while the Old Persian Version shows no such traces (Ahn, 1994: 70, n. 23). Generally the question should be asked if the *adaequatio* of text and reality was such an important issue in the

statements about Cyrus to strengthen his position as Messiah. Kratz dates this layer during the completion of the Second Temple in the reign of Darius, i.e. the years around 515 B.C.[32] The development of the creation formula in the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions also took place under Darius I.[33] The palace in Susa, where some of the inscriptions containing the formula were found (e.g. DSe, DSf) was built around 520 B.C.[34]

This means, that both the Old Testament texts and the formula from the Old Persian Inscription can be dated to a similar time during the reign of Darius. The texts at hand all share a unique view of creation that is more systematic and focuses more clearly on the main god than do the common Ancient Near Eastern creation texts.

This can be explained in two ways. Either there is an independent parallel development in two corpora of texts, the Old Testament and the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions. The main god gains significance and gradually more tasks are attributed to him.[35] As a consequence the respective deity becomes the only creator, and all parts of creation are explicitly described as their work. Or one of these groups of texts has influenced the other, either the Persian Royal Inscription the Old Testament or vice versa. In order to reach a conclusion in this matter we will have to closely examine the Old Testament texts. The examination will show that even the pattern of thought from the Old Persian formula can be seen in the Old Testament texts. So probably the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions inspired the three Old Testament texts.[36] And though the basic assumptions of the monotheistic idea of creation were present in the Old Testament in pre-Persian times, the first to utter this idea explicitly were Achaemenid scribes.

Ancient Near East at all. Vermeylen, 1987: 198–202. 208f. even sees expressions in Is 42:5 and 45:11–13 that cannot derive from the historical prophet. He can only ascribe both sayings to Second Isaiah himself by eliminating these expressions through literary criticism. This is not convincing (s. also Kratz, 1991: 130).

[32] Kratz, 1991: 183–191.

[33] Herrenschmidt, 1977: 35–39.

[34] Lecoq, 1997: 108. DSe and DSf already have the formula in the same version as DNa, s. Herrenschmidt, 1977: 35.

[35] The beginning of this development can be found in Enuma Elish, where Marduk assumes the tasks of many other gods and almost becomes creator of mankind.

[36] Though the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions were not really written for humans to read them (Herrenschmidt, 1976: 65) copies of these texts were distributed throughout the Empire (Ahn, 1992: 175–179; 1994: 29). Ahn therefore concludes that the content of the inscriptions could have been known by most subjects of the great king (1992: 177).

Is 42:5 describes the god YHWH with participles and introduces YHWH's following speech. YHWH made heaven and earth. He created (ברא) the heavens and spread them out, and he also spread out the earth and its plants. Finally YHWH gave breath (רוח ,נשמה s. Gen 2:7) to the people on earth.

In the following verse, Is 42:6, YHWH himself speaks in the 1st person common singular. He addresses a man, who is not specified here. YHWH calls him in righteousness, takes him by his hand, forms him and gives him as a covenant with the people (Israel) and as a light to the nations.[37] This man can be interpreted as the Persian king Cyrus[38] or as YHWH's (suffering) Servant[39]. He certainly has extra-human qualities, since he shall open blind eyes and bring out prisoners from the dungeon (V. 7). Maybe he can be understood as some kind of Messiah. And he is of relevance for the whole world, not for Israel alone.

According to the subsequent text, Is 45:12, YHWH, who speaks in the 1st com. sing., made earth, created man (ברא), spread out heaven and commanded its host. Now YHWH again speaks about a man he has chosen. He aroused him in righteousness and makes his paths straight. This man shall/will build YHWH's city and set free YHWH's exiles.[40] Since especially the freeing of the exiles is attributed to Cyrus in the Old Testament (e.g. the so-called Cyrus Decree II Chr 36; Esr 1)[41], Cyrus is meant in this passage.[42] Besides, Cyrus is mentioned by name at the beginning of Is 45, and the elder V.1–8 describe YHWH calling Cyrus as his anointed and giving him power over the world to help Israel.

Both Is 42:5–7 and 45:12f. follow a pattern. First, the whole creation, comprising heaven, earth and man, is ascribed to YHWH, then the installation of a Messiah is described. In the case of Is 45:12 the Messiah is the

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[37] The sentence can be understood as referring to the future (Yiqtol form with *waw copulativum*) or to the past (Wayyiqtol form) s. App. BHS. The Masoretes read Yiqtol with *waw copulativum*, that is future tense.

[38] Vermeylen, 1987:198.

[39] YHWH's Servant is one of the main figures in Second Isaiah. YHWH has chosen this modest and peaceful person, but his service leads the Servant to suffering and death. (s. Is 42,1–4; 49,1–6; 50,4–9; 52,13–53:12),

[40] The end of the vers (v. 13bβγ) is an addition (Vermeylen, 1987: 209; Kratz, 1991: 94).

[41] Besides, Is 45:13, II Chr 36:22 and Ezra 1:1 emphasize that YHWH woke up (עור Hiphil) Cyrus, s. Kratz, 1991: 102–108.

[42] S. Vermeylen, 1987: 208f; Berges, 2008: 410.

Persian king Cyrus. This Messiah brings blessing to YHWH's people Israel, if not to the world as a whole. The structural parallels with the Persian Royal inscriptions can hardly be overlooked.[43] Creation leads to universal happiness under the rule of the king, who is installed or made by YHWH or Ahuramazdā. The only real difference is, that in Is 42:5–7 and 45:12f. this king is not explicitly called one ruler of many people.

The priestly account of creation is certainly one of the best-known and most influential texts in the entire Bible. In a simple, yet sublime style it describes, how God made the world from chaos, from Towu-wabohu in six days. Finally God created man and woman according to his own likeness as his viceroys in the world. A lot of YHWH's works are blessed and/or called "very good". At the end, on the seventh day, it is Sabbath: God rests from his works.[44]

In Gen 1:1–2:4a the overall pattern of the Old Persian Creation formula cannot be detected as easily as in Is 42:5–7 and 45:12f. Yet there are echoes of it. In Gen 1:27f. man and woman are made to multiply and to rule over the animals. Like in the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions at the end of creation, one ruler/king over all is made by God. Since now every man and every woman becomes a ruler, the inscriptions seem to become democratized. That man and woman in Gen 1:28 rule over all animals instead of over all people may even be a faint parody of the Persian formula.[45]

Besides, traces of the Persian *šiyati-* can be found in Gen 1. One possible trace is God's satisfaction with his world, which he finds "very good"

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[43] S. Ahn, 1994: 6; Kratz, 1991: 112. Whether there are influences of the Avesta in Second Isaiah, remains a tantalizing problem. Both corpora contain poetic texts, which can be very difficult to interpret, so that similar wordings may refer to different issues (Ahn, 1994: 13–21). Besides the question, how Judean theologians should have gained access to the Avesta, is still unsolved (Ahn, 1994: 29–49; Blenkinsopp, 2011: 505f.).

[44] For the growth of this text s. Krüger, 2001 and Levin, 2003.

[45] For more criticism of Achaemenid rule in the Priestly Codes s. Rudnig-Zelt, 2017: 258f. Rüterswörden, 1993: 118–130, however, sees the rulership of humankind in Gen 1:28 as a positive echo of Achaemenid Royal Iconography. So he interprets Gen 1:28 as permission for all humans to enter the whole word and live there without fear as long as they stick to the divine law. The restriction of rulership to animals (Rüterswörden, 1993: 108–115; Neumann-Gorsolke, 2004: 224–229) instead of people in my opinion clearly shows, that this echo to Achaemind influences is not positive. One might even call this adaption of Achaemenid Royal ideology a mimicry in the sense of postcolonial studies (Hendel, 2005: 29–31).

(esp. v. 31). The other one is God's rest on the seventh day, a day God blesses and consecrates.[46]

These close structural parallels between three Old Testament texts and the formula from the Old Persian Royal Inscriptions imply, that the inscriptions inspired Jewish Theologians in Babylonia or Yehud to achieve a more systematic view of creation. Before those Persian influences reached Jewish Theologians, YHWH was already seen as the only creator. No other god is mentioned, who creates anything.[47] Yet like in the neighbour religions the creation of the world and the creation of humankind are kept separate, as if effected by two different gods. The Old Persian formula inspired the Old Testament theologians to combine already existent ideas in a more systematic way: YHWH created heaven, earth and humankind.

Yet it was not the aim of these inscriptions to teach anybody anything about creation. Rather they plead for loyalty towards the Persian king among Persians and among all other people of the empire. Did the authors of the Inscriptions achieve this aim with the Judeans, who composed Gen 1:1–2:4a; Is 42:5–7 and 45:12f.?

The Persians could not persuade the Judeans to accept or even worship Ahuramazdā – if the Persians wanted to do so at all. Ahuramazdā is not mentioned in the Old Testament. When the Judean theologians took over the pattern of the Old Persians Royal Inscriptions they changed the gods without justifying this change. From a modern perspective YHWH and Ahuramazdā contend for the position of the only powerful god in the world, but this was no issue in the Old Testament. The Judeans were probably not confronted with any Persian claims in favor of Ahuramazdā.

The failure of the Old Persians Inscriptions from the perspective of Royal or Imperial Ideology is more serious. The Persians clearly did not manage to convince the Judeans that their current Persian king was installed by YHWH as part of creation. Cyrus remains the only Persian king that fits this category from a Judean perspective. But the text, which expresses this high esteem of Cyrus (Is 45:12f.), was written after his death. There are no similar texts about a Darius, Xerxes or Artaxerxes.

Does this mean, that Judean intellectuals were ready to rise against the

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[46] Antonioz, 2017: 39. There are also striking parallels between Gen 1:1–2:4a and Dnb. Dnb declares, that Ahuramazdā "created this marvellous [sic!] (creation) that is seen" (Schmitt, 2000: 40). In Gen 1:4.10.12.18.21.25.31 God *sees* that his works are good.

[47] For El Elyon in Deut 32:8f. s. above.

Persian king and to incite their readers to rebellion? Likely not. Rather the biblical adaptions of the Old Persian Royal inscriptions are hesitant to answer the question, who the political leader chosen by YHWH should be. So the author(s) of Is 42:5–7 need not clarify, who precisely makes the blind see and sets the prisoners free. And in Gen 1 everyman and everywoman is a ruler.

The dissociation from the claims of Persian Royal Ideology might go even deeper. Gen 1:1–2:4b shows an ironical distance from Royal Ideology.[48] Everybody is a ruler – over animals. Is 42:5–7 tends to expect more of YHWH's chosen Messiah than any mortal king could possibly achieve. But to keep one's distance does not mean rebellion. The Judean intellectuals probably lived as more or less obedient subjects using Persian Royal or Imperial Ideology or Theology to further their own.[49]

So are there Persian influences on the important theological issue of creation in the Old Testament? The answer is "Yes", but these influences are certainly limited. The Persians did not introduce any completely new ideas. They only gave a strong impulse to combine well-established ideas in a more coherent concept of creation. Though the monotheistic idea of creation was first formulated explicitly by Achaemenid scribes, it owes its worldwide influence to biblical literature and traditions.

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[48] S. also, Kratz, 2013a: 159f.

[49] This somewhat reluctant reception of Persian rule and propaganda is of course not limited to Yehud. The different traditions about the last Babylonian king Nabonidus may reflect similar debates in Babylonia regarding the acceptance of Persian rule (Kratz, 2013b: 48–54).

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Traces of Egyptian Culture in Plato's Laws*

Ennio Biondi

Ciao caro Mauro ...

Introduction

The increase of *loci Aegypti* in the final reflections of Plato, for instance the one subsequent to the last trip to Sicily, is clear, and it is well understood that the philosopher consistently looked at the Egyptian culture as a constant point of reference for the development of his mature production.[1] This presence is in direct connection with the tradition, already present in the ancient sources, that Plato had travelled to Egypt.[2] Several sources, both Greek and Roman, hint to this possibility from Diodorus to Diogenes Laertius.[3] However, if we analyse well the nature of these sources, we see without difficulty they are at least three centuries after the time in which Plato lived: quite clearly it is a cultural *topos* which of course has its founders in the cases of Solon and Pythagoras, the first Greek intellectuals who were thought to have travelled to Egypt. Travelling to Egypt constituted for the Greeks of the archaic and classical age (remember the hint of Herodotus of Solon's journey to visit the Pharaoh Amasis)[4] a kind

* I would thank Prof. M. Piérart for his precious suggestions about the last part of the Platonic philosophical reflection. The responsibility of this paper is obviously only mine.

1 Between early Platonic works only the *Ion* and the *Gorgias* contain some hints of the Egyptian culture, see Froidefond, 1971: 267. About Plato and Egypt in general see also Brisson, 1987: 153–168.

2 See Nawratil, 1974: 589–603.

3 Diod. I 98.1–4; Cic. *De fin*. V 87; V 50; *De re pub*. I 10; *Tusc*. IV 44; Quint. I 12.15; Strab. XVII 129 (= Eudoxos, t.12 Lasserre); Luc. X 181–183 ; Plut. *De Is. et Os*. 354d–e (= Eudoxos t. 17 Lasserre); *Sol.* II; Apul. *De Platone et eius dog.* 186; Clem. *Strom*. I 69.1 (= Eudoxos t. 18 Lasserre), Olympiod. *In Plat. Alcib*. II, 134–8; Laert. III 6–7.

4 Hdt. I 30.1; compare II 177.

of seal which sanctioned the consecration of the wisdom of the Greek intellectuals as a result of more or less prolonged contact with a culture certainly more ancient than the Hellenic one and that in comparison to it constituted a model:[5] the process by which the Egyptian culture is perceived as mantled in authoritativeness was outlined for the first time by Hecataeus of Miletus, at least according to written sources that we have, if the famous story of the statues of the priests in the Egyptian temples told by Herodotus,[6] should be read in this sense.[7] From this point of view, it is understandable why in most of the sources where we read about the trip to Egypt,[8] the name of Plato is always accompanied by that of other scholars, such as Lycurgus, Solon, Eudoxus, Pythagoras, Democritus and Empedocles. It is therefore a process of legitimation that invests most of the leading figures of the archaic and classical Greek culture and that deepens over the centuries until finally reaching Diogenes Laertius, a true collector of all the traditions that were established about the figures of the great Greek philosophers and of the conditions under which these traditions were superimposed during the ancient times.

Egypt as a Model of Art and Sciences

It is significant that Plato refers to the Egyptian culture as a model of paideia within the *Laws*, which is the last work of the philosopher: it is a choice that is in fact loaded with consequences as we shall see later, and we believe it is inherent in the final evolution of the political speculation of Plato himself. Egyptian culture is used by Plato to highlight some points that serve as the cornerstones of his philosophical system: the education system is at the centre of the *Laws*, where the same mechanism linked to jurisprudence has a meaning as a bearer of morality, so as well as the key figures of the ideal state of the *Laws*, namely legislators and guardians of the laws have a role that lives by the close connection between law and ethics. As for the *paideia*, Plato keeps music and the empirical sciences constantly under observation as fields fundamental for the growth of the young men of the city of Magnesia:[9] there are two cases in which Plato

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5 West, 1971: 3; Hornung, 1987: 113–126.

6 Hdt. II 143.

7 See Gruen, 2011: 79–80, 89.

8 See Korff, 2008: 113.

9 Korff, 2008: 50-53.

seems to justify his theoretical choices about education by recourse to comparison with what happened in Egypt in the field of musical arts and sciences.[10]

It was said that Plato writes several times regarding the subject of music in the *Laws*; however, we are interested in a passage of the same work in which he says

> "It is marvellous, even in the telling. It appears that long ago they determined on the rule of which we are now speaking, that the youth of a State should practise in their rehearsals postures and tunes that are good: these they prescribed in detail and posted up in the temples (ἀπέφηναν ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς), and outside this officials list it was, and still is, forbidden (οὐδὲ νῦν ἔξεστιν) to painters and all other producers of postures and representations to introduce any innovation or invention, whether in such productions or in any other branch of music, over and above the traditional forms."[11]

It sets out the principle that musical arts are an educational principle of great importance, if it is true that young people (νέοι) must learn to move in beautiful movements and to sing beautiful melodies. However, the discussion regarding Egyptian culture is that it establishes a link between the music and the sphere of the sacred because it fixes in a definite form the rule of good musical education; for this reason the Egyptians, once fixed the right movements according to their melodies, wanted to emphasize the immutability of the rules anchoring them to the sphere of the sacred,[12] i.e. creating indicative images inside the temples, by prohibiting painters to realize several or devising new images compared to the traditional ones: a prohibition that lasted even in Plato's time, according to the philosopher, in every field related to the sphere of music.[13] The immutability of the law is a principle that justifies itself by anchoring to the sphere of the sacred: in the case of Platonic Egypt everything is highlighted well by the fact that the wall-based music manuals, if we may put it this way, are painted inside the temples, the space *par excellence* of divinity, in relation to which becoming, and therefore change, is an expression of imperfection. The idea of the immutability of the law is a concept very dear to Plato, if it is

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[10] Compare Plato *Leg*. 659e; see Schöpsdau, 2003: 606.

[11] Plat. *Leg*. 656 d–e. engl. trans. Bury 1967.

[12] Froidefond, 1971: 327.

[13] Plat. *Leg*. 656e–657a.

true that it is a cornerstone of the constitutional system, with metaphysical implications, of the new city of Magnesia.[14] It comes not only from the fact that the Plato of the *Laws* seeks the legitimacy of the rule by virtue of his divine nature, but also because the philosopher conceives negatively *a priori* the idea of change (μεταβολήν), seen as a sort of necessarily degenerative evolution:[15] from this point of view it is significant to remember the proverb repeatedly cited by Plato, μὴ κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα, namely the exhortation not to dislodge what is immovable.[16] However, it is clear that young Egyptians draw fruit from recognizing the immutability of musical education that is repeated, interpreting the following words of Plato, according to the same criteria since time immemorial.[17]

In book VII of the *Laws* Plato returns to consider the Egyptian pedagogy at the centre of his speculative system: in this case the knowledge in question is that of the mathematical sciences, especially their teaching and application within a primary educational system that involves children (παισὶν) from ten to thirteen, which means that it covers, has covered and will cover the tuition for all Egyptian citizens without distinction.[18] We read Plato himself

> "One ought to declare, then, that the freeborn children that should learn as much of these subjects as the innumerable crowd of children in Egypt learn along with their letters. First, as regards counting (περὶ λογισμοὺς), lessons have been invented for the merest infants to learn, by way of play and fun, -modes of dividing up apples and chaplets, so that the same totals are adjusted to larger and smaller groups, and modes of sorting out boxers and wrestlers, in byes and pairs, taking them alternately or consecutively, in their natural order. Moreover, by way of play, the teachers mix together bowls made of gold, bronze, silver and the like, and others distribute them, as I said, by groups of a single kind, adapting the rules of elementary arithmetic to play; and thus they are of service to the pupils for their future tasks of drilling, leading and marching armies (εἴς τε τὰς τῶν στρατοπέδων τάξεις καὶ ἀγωγὰς καὶ στρατείας), or of household management, and they render them both more helpful in every way to themselves and more alert. The next step of the teachers is to clear away, by lessons in the weights and

[14] On Plato and the divinity of the law see now Lutz, 2012: 30–40.
[15] Compare Plato *Leg*. 797d–e.
[16] Plat. *Leg*. 684e, 843a, 913b.
[17] Plat. *Leg*. 656e–657a.
[18] Compare Froidefond, 1971: 310.

> measures, a certain kind of ignorance, both absurd and disgraceful, which is naturally inherent in all men touching lines, surfaces and solids."[19]

Plato explicitly states that Egypt has to set an example concerning the teaching of mathematics, which should be learned together with letters. He proposes essentially two considerations, one methodological, the other more inherent in the objectives of the educational system, where the latter is, perhaps, the consequence of the first. The Egyptians teach their own children math through play, and this should be valid for all of other children: namely παίδες learn the operations of calculation, the distribution, the succession and finally the measurement.[20] All these operations, if learned properly, release the child from the ignorance naturally inherent in all men.[21]

On the other hand it is also true that the mathematical sciences are taught through games because in this way they also benefit the young people from a practical point of view both in the field of military arts, particularly in the task of deploying, running and marching armies, and in the management of the home, with the final result that men become entirely more useful to themselves and more vigilant. Here the issue is certainly the practical application of mathematics; Plato does not advance a programmatic definition of knowledge, nor does he proposes a theoretical research program, mathematics is outlined in concrete as the science whose learning allows the child to master a knowledge that is not abstracted, but is a concrete application in logistics and art management of the house.[22]

Conceptualizing Ancient Egypt

The fundamental problem is of course to establish what Plato actually knew of the Egyptian reality when he reflected on the actual use of music and mathematics as educational factors within the Egyptian culture. As for music, it should certainly be noted that other Greek authors had paused to remember Egyptian music and art, as will also be the case with later writers,[23] however, the news that the Egyptians fixed the immutability

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[19] Plat. *Leg*. 819a–d. En. Trans. Bury 1967. Compare Plato *Leg.* 747c.

[20] Compare Korff, 2008: 21, 113.

[21] See Schöpsdau, 2003: 608.

[22] See Schöpsdau, 2003: 606–609.

[23] Hdt. II 79; PGM XIII; Plin. *Nat. Hist.* VIII 184–186; Aelian. *Nat. Anim*. 11.10; Xen.

of the musical rules is only attested in Plato:[24] the philosopher in fact does not reflect on the nature of music and dance in Egypt and does not give any specific information about it, rather he focuses on the paideutic ability that they promote. From this point of view, it is significant that the principle of the immutability of the laws is central in the political system and in general in the Platonic work.

However, it is important to emphasize that the walls of Egyptian temples repeatedly reproduce the texts of hymns and songs.[25]

Also one cannot forget the fact the dance was a central theme in Egyptian art, as demonstrated by the fact that some recent studies distinguish ten different dance styles within the artistic climate of the Old Kingdom.[26] Images linked to the sphere of dance frequently appear on the walls of temples too, as part of representations of large festivals.[27]

There is no doubt that music and dance were central in the interests of the Egyptians, certainly in the artistic sphere, and in this sense Plato proves to have a general reliable understanding of Egyptian culture, however, precisely the central point of his reflection is questioned by Egyptian sources in that sense: there is no trace of the fact that the Egyptians confer an educational value to songs and dances, isolating the moral factor that was connected to the fixity of a rule deemed perfect to the point of being reproduced in sacred places in accordance with this idea.[28]

The fact that Egyptian culture was certainly skilled in the practice of mathematics is clear from precise testimony: so, we are interested here in considering those sources that are prior to contact of Egyptian mathematics with that of Greek mathematics, contact which occurred for the first time systematically, in all probability, within the context of the Pythagorean culture, model that Plato held in a certain regard.[29] The Egyptian sources on mathematics date back no later than the XII dynasty: it was a period in which we have documents of paramount importance, especially because

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Eph. V 4; Clem. *Strom*. VI 4.35. Diod. I 16.1; I 81; Plut. *De Is. et Os*. 352b. On Plutarch and Egyptian culture see now Görgesmanns, 2017: 7–20.

[24] Rutherford, 2013: 74.

[25] Rutherford, 2013: 73, n. 19 with bibliography.

[26] Kinney, 2008.

[27] Rutherford, 2013: 73.

[28] Rutherford, 2013: 78.

[29] See Schöpsdau, 2003: 607–608, 612–613.

it is possible to find a clearly defined *modus operandi*.[30] At this date we have some very important sources: the Moscow papyrus,[31] those of Kahun and Berlin, and in a sense even the far most famous of Rhind, because this latter is a copy which we possess and which reproduces in fact an original dating back to the era in question. These are documents that address well specific problems, especially geometry, metrics, based on the principle of proportionality:[32] the fragments that we possess of the papyrus of Kahun contain evidence of arithmetic operations, multiplication, division and reduction of problems of arithmetic and geometry related to capacity measurements; on the other hand the papyrus of Moscow contains the resolution of five special problems which represent cases that are not linked.[33] The most significant document in relation to mathematics is certainly the Egyptian Rhind papyrus: it is a document characterized by a certain degree of esoteric mystery[34] that dates back to the troubled period dating from the presence of the Hyksos.[35] It consists of an introduction, which contains the tables for a resolution of fractions of which the numerator is 2, and three books: arithmetic, measurement (metric), in turn divided into three parts (cubic surfaces, areas, angles of inclination), arithmetic problems.[36]

These documents allow us to think that the Egyptians had probably a type of mathematical knowledge characterized by a high degree of empiricism that fits, if we can say so, more to technical outcomes of the resolution than to the general theory characterized by a certain degree of abstraction. Egyptian mathematical knowledge is characterized certainly by the accuracy of the calculation procedure for the rational and classificatory methodology and for the use of the test method, the warranty seal of each scientific procedure.[37]

We do not know of course whether Plato was aware of this Egyptian evidence, directly or filtered through similar documents that circulated in his time: but it is clear that he had realized the general characteristics

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30 Rey, 1930: 202.
31 See Gericke, 1984: 61–64.
32 Rey, 1930: 202.
33 Rey, 1930: 209–213.
34 Rey, 1930: 214; 219.
35 See Rey: 1930: 214.
36 For the structure and the principal themes of Rhind papyrus see Gericke, 1984: 51–62.
37 Compare final conclusions in Gericke, 1984: 64–65.

of Egyptian mathematics when he insisted on the concept of Egyptian φιλοχρηματία as evidence of the fact that Egyptians were regarded by the philosopher as having a practical mindset and a true merchant spirit.[38]

It is worth considering, however, that Plato assigns even in this case, as it had been in the case of music, an educational value in relation to the mathematical knowledge.

Even in this case Plato reports news of which we have no evidence: it is also remarkable how precise he is in witnessing the idea that education was imparted through real games. Certainly, Plato demonstrates knowledge, already in his early dialogues of precise educational Egyptian realities, with a board game, the result of the invention of Thoth[39] and of which the philosopher does not ignore the paideutic value,[40] but nothing shows us that the Egyptians used to practice pedagogical games in general, especially in mathematics.

So I think that this correspondence between mathematics and music in Egypt in the *Laws* of Plato is significant. In this sense, one might think that Plato uses an interpretive method which he needed to prove his theory, unless one wants to follow the assumption of some scholars who think that Plato could have said what he said in the *Laws* because he had explained in his way the clumsy operations that the children repeated under the lash of the scribe master and that these were repeated even when they come out of school.[41] But from this point of view it seems a hypothesis that does not add anything to what we already know.

Egypt in Plato's Political Project

From what has emerged until now I think that there are two questions that we must ask ourselves: is Egypt mentioned by Plato a well-defined historical reality or is it the result entirely of the intellectual work of the Athenian philosopher? Beyond any answer to the previous question, what is the Egypt to which Plato refers, and which served as a (pseudo) historical background for his stories?

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38 Froidefond, 1971: 312.

39 Plat. *Phaedr*. 274d.

40 Plat. *Gorg*. 450d; compare. *Leg*. 820c–d.

41 Froidefond, 1971: 312–313.

From a certain point of view, it is already established that, both regarding the sphere of music and that of the exact sciences, Plato had a basic knowledge of the Egyptian context that cannot be underestimated:[42] however, when we verify the pedagogical application of music and mathematics within the Egyptian society the historical truth of the words of Plato is not certain. It is therefore clear that Platonic Egypt rather than being a historical reality appears to be the result of a work of intellectualization that is functional to the ideal projects,[43] and in this case, ethical and political, that Plato seeks to capitalize on the *Laws*. It seems that Plato has recourse to Egypt to give an aura of authority to projects proposed for the future city of Magnesia; in this sense Plato arises in the wake of the trend that had already begun to delineate the end of the archaic period starting from Hecataeus and that they recognized the greater antiquity of Egyptian culture compared to the Greek one, and consequently he tended to reconstruct a direct thread between the two cultures according to the offspring perspective of the young Hellenic culture from the mature Egyptian:[44] the Herodotean work should also be seen under this light.

The later Plato certainly has a recognized tendency to archaism and conservatism: this seems to be the final outcome certainly influenced by the final disappointment of his political projects that were supposed to be applied in the context of Syracuse. Egypt represents for Plato an essential point of reference in opposition to the political reality that seemed to degenerate and so far from his ideals, namely the classical Athens of the V and IV centuries BC.[45] That is why Platonic Egypt is certainly cloaked in a certain static and rigor: this is arguably the antithesis of what Plato considered the chaos that marked the political reality of his time in Athens. If we think to the model of the immutability of the Egyptian musical laws it is an evident antithesis in comparison to the mess of rules that made of classical Athens, according to the same philosopher, a real theatreocracy (θεατροκρατία).[46] Also the importance of the mathematical sciences, that Plato emphasizes for the Egyptian society, could be useful to the

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[42] Rutherford, 2013: 67–68 compare Brisson, 1987: 167.

[43] Vasunia, 2001: 239.

[44] Vasunia, 2001: 216–226.

[45] Vasunia, 2001: 235–239.

[46] Plat. *Leg*. 700e–701a.

educational program that Plato proposed in his Academy if those late traditions are true about the fact that the phrase «Let no one ignorant of geometry enter»[47] was affixed to the school.[48]

Already Karl Marx, in a passage of *The Capital*, had realized that Egypt in the *Republic* was the result of an idealization that served as a model for his contemporaries.[49]

However, it is natural to wonder which were the Egyptian historical sources that Plato studied to carry out his work. It is clear that Egypt contemporary to Plato could not be seen as a privileged observatory since in the IV century BC Egypt was certainly an impoverished kingdom humiliated by the Persian occupation:[50] it was an empire that the Egyptians had never tolerated, if it is true that they moved several rebellions against the authority of the Great King;[51] Plato makes no mention of this reality. Actually, Plato seems to paint, at least in the *Laws*, an Egypt that in an ancient past (πάλαι)[52] fixed rules which were still in the contemporary rigidly observed. From this point of view it seems natural to observe that the past to which Plato refers alludes to times rather distant and in this sense we have seen how the mathematical papyri observed the cultural reality of the Middle Kingdom. However, it seems legitimate to ask how Plato could read up on ancient Egypt in a documented manner: this evidence which, moreover, would be very unusual if we exclude the possibility of the Platonic trip to Egypt and the fact that in the Greek classical age there were no sources, including Hecataeus and Herodotus, that could meet the intellectual needs of the Athenian philosopher.

Plato undoubtedly looked to Egypt of the Saite dynasty (664–525 BC);[53] it was the political context in which the first systematic contacts between Egyptians and Greeks occurred for the first time during the I millennium BC, a moment in which Greek mercenaries served the pharaoh

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47 Excellent *status quaestionis* in Reale, 2013: chapter VIII.

48 About Plato and geometry see Plat. *Resp*. 526d–527c; compare Plut. *De gen. Socr*. 579b.

49 Marx, 1977 (1864): 488–489.

50 Grimal, 1988: 441–446.

51 I.e. the rebellion against Darius and the episodes of Inarus and Amyrtaeus; for the first episode see Briant, 1996: 173, Pétigny, 2014: 24–25. For the other rebellions see Briant, 1996: 591–594, Kahn, 2008: 424–440, Waters, 2014: 189–190; see now Biondi, 2016.

52 Plat. *Leg*. 656d.

53 Vasunia, 2001: 233. Compare Rutherford, 2013: 78.

Psammetichus I in his struggle for power[54] and the Greek presence intensifies at Naukratis.[55]

But this is not enough to justify the idea that Plato had the Saite Egypt as a source for his research: in fact we have seen that Platonic Egypt tends to be conservative and archaic; this is a trend that is real precisely for the Egypt of the VIII and VII century BC, during the reign of the Ethiopian dynasty and the Saite, this last being the only one with which the Greeks had significant contacts. This was the period in which Egypt claimed in cultural trends that sought to reconsider and update the distant past splendours of the Pharaohs.[56] It was a change in the cultural horizon which was probably caused by the new international contacts that Egypt had to entertain, Semites and Greeks in the first place. Certainly it is not easy to define an archaic trend within the archaic Egyptian culture: we know that there is no historiography like the Greek one; however, the Egyptian annals, the royal and priests lists can testify to something about it. The period from the VIII to VII century was characterized by Egypt with the acquisition of a new historical consciousness that was probably the result of a centralized administrative reform. On the other hand sources testify to a cultural phenomenon rather manifested, namely the importance of the temple as the headquarters of intellectual and cultural life and, in this sense, the Platonic testimony on the standard-setting music inside the temples is more important than ever. Even in Herodotus in fact the Egyptian kings are introduced from the list of temples that they built and restored.[57]

The attitude that the Egyptians had against their past between the VIII and VII centuries has been defined by scholars of type 'antiquarian' or 'canonical': it is an approach in which the past rather than being an example of productivity to be recovered, is a lost model to imitate and reconstruct, according to a philological method that is conscious of the distance between the present and the elapsed time. It is unclear how this attitude was also useful for the purposes of the political rulers of the two dynasties, the Ethiopic and the Saitic.

In this sense, Plato looked to the Saite dynasty of Egypt with a double archaic intent: he presented Egypt as a model of cultural maturity in the archaic Mediterranean milieu for the Greeks that looked out on the

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[54] Agut-Labordère, 2012: 293–306; compare Coloru, 2012: 254–258.

[55] About Naukratis in general see Möller, 2000; good synthesis in Coloru, 2012: 245–248.

[56] Loprieno, 2003: 152.

[57] See for example the case of Amasis, Hdt. II 175–176.

international *scenario*, and he presented Egypt as a land which had returned to a glorious and triumphant past according to strict and conservative customs. All of this was useful for Plato's *Laws*: so he could propose a conservative exemplum which conceived an ethical-political alternative to the demagoguery that, in his opinion, was dominant in Athens in the IV century BC.[58]

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[58] Compare Brisson, 1987: 167.

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Indian Philosophers and Alexander the Great – Reality and Myth

Aleksandra Szalc

> "There are some who say that the study of philosophy had its beginning among the barbarians. They urge that the Persians have had their Magi, the Babylonians or Assyrians their Chaldaeans, and the Indians their Gymnosophists; and among the Celts and Gauls there are the people called Druids or Holy Ones, for which they cite as authorities the Magicus of Aristotle and Sotion in the twenty-third book of his Succession of Philosophers."[1]

With these words Diogenes Laertios begins the "Life of Eminent Philosophers" and at the same time, presents the idea that the source of philosophy is to be found among the barbarians.[2] The apocryphical stories of early Greek philosophers travelling to India in order to obtain knowledge were popular in Late Antiquity.[3] This image of the "holy men" or "wise men" among the foreign peoples was common throughout the Antiquity and later widely represented in the Christian writings. The conception of India as a land of wisdom and philosophy originated during the Indian campaigns of Alexander, and became a part of the canonical conception of India[4] and almost a literary *topos*. Alexander's companions, most importantly Onesicritus, Aristobulus and Nearchus, wrote accounts of the Indian ascetics and philosophers, who soon became an inherent part of India's image. Not long after that, the tales of Alexander and his adventures were turned into a fictional biography of the Macedonian king, known as the *Alexander Romance*. This collection of legends made the episode

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1 *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Diogenes Laertius 1. Prologue.

2 Dihle, 1964: 21.; Romm, 1994: 45–81. See also: Clement of Alexandria, *Strom*. I 15.

3 Arora, 1982: 482; Karttunen, 1989: 108–109; Karttunen, 2002: 137.

4 Karttunen, 2002: 136.

of Alexander's meeting with the naked philosophers even more popular than it already was.

It was the spring of 326 BC when Alexander reached Taxila (sanskrit: *Takṣaśilā*), the first big Indian city on his way, a centre of culture and philosophy, with the University listed among the greatest in Antiquity.[5] Taxila was the first city that gave the Macedonian king a sense of Indian culture – also, it was where he saw naked Indian ascetics for the first time. Called by the Greeks the "naked philosophers" – *gymnosophistai*, they have become a preeminent feature of the Indian landscape as seen from the West.[6] Along with the growth and spreading of the *Alexander Romance* – their image became one of the main characteristics of India.

The purpose of this article is to examine the image of naked Indian philosophers as it appears in Alexander's companions' writings, mainly by: Onesicritus (*BNJ* 134 F17a ap Strabo 15,1,63–65), Aristobulus (*BNJ* 139 F41 ap Str. 15,1,61) and Nearchus (*BNJ* 133 F23 ap Str. 15,1,66–67), to confront those accounts with the reality of Indian asceticism in the times of Alexander's invasion and finally to investigate whether the friendly gymnosophists in the *Alexander Romance*, who dwell in almost utopian scenery and are able to confront Alexander and impress him with their wisdom, have something in common with real Indian ascetics. The idea of asceticism has a long history and great significance in India, beginning with the earliest written texts up to the present time when we can still observe Indian ascetics in every Indian city related to the religious beliefs of Hindus, Jains or Buddhists. The first mention of ascetic practices and their power can be found in the Vedic corpus, although it is disputable whether or not and to what extent the idea of asceticism was influenced by non-Vedic currents.[7]

For the purpose of this article I decided to examine the treatises describing and regulating the life of Indian society. At the time of

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[5] On Alexander in India: Narain 1965; Eggermont,1975; Bosworth, 1988: 119–146; Eggermont 1993; Karttunen 1997; Hahn 2000. On Taxila: Marshall 1918; Marshall 1951; Ḍār 1984; Dani, 1986; Karttunen, 1990: 85–96.

[6] See: Wilcken, 1923: 174–207; Festugière, 1943:157–182; Brown, 1949: 24–53; Skurzak 1954: 95–100; 1974: 215–220; Ingalls, 1962: 281–298; Hansen, 1965: 351–380; Zunts 1959: 436–440; Dumèzil, 1976: 550-560; Stoneman, 1994: 500–510; Stoneman, 1995: 99–114; Bosworth, 1998: 173–203; Karttunen, 2002: 135–142; Winiarczyk, 2008: 89–107; 2009a: 29–77; 2009b: 115–134.

[7] See discussion in: Chakraborti, 1973: 3–14; Bronkhorst, 2008: 4–8-

their creation, the idea of asceticism was shaped and defined and even though these texts are dated to the time after the conquest of Alexander, it can be safely assumed that the knowledge and rules enclosed in the treatises is a result of a long process of formation. On the other hand, the accounts of Alexander's companions are not very detailed and describe the philosophers vaguely without any distinctive features which could help to identify the particular sect or the origin of described ascetics. Both Alexander's companions and Megasthenes probably encountered various types of ascetics: *munis* (brahmaical ascetics), *yatis* (ascetics), *vānaprasthas* (forest dwellers), *saṁnyāsa* (world renouncers), Buddhist śramaṇas (homeless wanderers), Jaina monks and others living at that time.[8] However, Nearchus and Aristobulus seem to distinguish between ascetics and Brahmins.[9]

To confront the popular view of the episode being interpreted as rhetorical and reflecting a Cynic learning, I have examined the early Indian sources, mainly the most important Indian śastras, the rules of *dharma* (i.e. the right behaviour according to *ṛta*, the order that coordinates the operation of the universe and everything in it).

The Dharmasūtras contain the first description of four stages of life of the Hindu devotee (the aśrama).[10] These are: *brahmacārin* (student), *gṛhastha* (householder), *vānaprastha* (forest dweller) and *saṁnyāsin* (renouncer). *Baudhāyana*, *Gautama* and *Āpastamba Dharmasūstra* are the first to record the system. *Baudhāyana*, *Gautama* and *Āpastamba* can be dated in the beginning of the third cent. BC to the middle of the second cent. BC[11] and the *Mānava – Dharmaśāstra*, one of the most influential Indian treatises of *dharma*, whose authorship, although anonymous, is traditionally ascribed to the first teacher and essentially the first king called "Manu".[12] It should not come as a surprise that the first code regulating the duties of king and the structure of his kingdom was ascribed to the legendary first king; the content of the laws of Manu was essential to establishing the possible date of the treatise; the appearance of "Suvarṇa" the gold coin, which was unknown to *Arthaśāstra*, and was not used in

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[8] Stoneman, 1995: 108–110; Karttunen, 1997: 61–62; Goyal, 2000: 131–132.

[9] Winiarczyk, 2008: 90.

[10] Chakraborti, 1973: 50–82; Olivelle, 1993: 73–74; Āpastamba, II 21.–-22.1.

[11] Olivelle, 1999: xxxiv.

[12] Olivelle, 2005: 19.

India earlier than in times of the Kushans.[13] This confirms the dating of G. Bühler, the author of the first standarized translation (after Sir W. Jones' translation from 1794) who states that it was composed around second cent. AD.[14] Nevertheless, some of the doctrines presented in the treatise seem archaic[15] and may come from the earliest times.

The *Arthaśāstra*, a monumental treatise covering the matters of law, economy, organisation of the state, society and religion was traditionally dated to the period of Maurya empire, the first fully developed state in ancient India. This thesis is still vividly discussed and it seems that no consensus has been reached over the date of the treatise. Traditionally, the composition of *Arthaśāstra* is ascribed to Ćanakya, the minister who helped Chandragupta Maurya overthrow the Nanda empire and start the most powerful and widespread state in ancient India, ruled by the Maurya dynasty. This date is being questioned by scholars who believe that the final line of the treatise (15,1,73, Kangle, 1965), which is the only clear link between the work and Maurya times, was interpolated only later and that the actual date of composition of *Arthaśāstra* should be placed in second cent. AD. The analysis of linguistics and the appearance of such luxury goods as silk and coral are seen as evidence of a date later than the third cent. BC.[16] On the other hand, those deliberations have been contradicted in favour of the Mauryan dating.[17] Yet even if one agrees with the later date, the treatise cannot be considered as completely useless for studies on Indian society of Maurya period, as the formation of the treatise goes back even further to the pre-Maurya times and stems from traditions of many schools of thought.[18]

The main and the most popular account of the naked Indian philosophers comes from Onesicritus, considered less trustworthy than other companions of Alexander, due to his favor of the marvellous and his

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[13] Olivelle, 2005: 24–25.

[14] Bühler, 1886: cxvii.

[15] Bühler, 1886: cv; Olivelle, 2005: 25.

[16] See the discussion in: McClish, 2012: 280–309; Trautmann, 2012: 23–27; Olivelle, 2013: 25–28.

[17] Kosambi, 1958: 169–173; Shamasastry 1967: vii-xxxiii; Kangle, 1965: 59–106, Thapar 1997: 337–347.

[18] Schingloff, 1967; Karttunen, 1989: 146–147; Trautmann, 1971; 2012: 26–27; Scharfe 1993: 1–102; Sharma, 2005: 22; Olivelle, 2013: 28.

literary ambitions[19]. Furthermore, he was fond of Cynic philosophy, which may be clearly seen in his account of Indian philosophers: the theory of the golden age, presented by Mandanis[20], their praise of life close to nature, ascetic practices, the denunciation of pleasure and praise of labor.[21] It is not my intention to expand on that subject here, as the discussion has a long history; the Cynic origin of description of Indian philosophers is not obvious anymore[22], as the image of Indian ascetics is in fact not so distant from their actual customs and habits; these are the subject of this article. My purpose is to examine the habits of Indian philosophers described in chosen accounts and not to determine whether their beliefs expressed in Onesicritus' description are Greek, Cynic, or perhaps Indian beliefs in Cynic disguise.[23]

Onesicritus claims to have been sent to philosophers by Alexander, which can be an evidence of his attitude towards himself; it seems that Onesicritus wanted to put himself on the spot, as a philosopher capable of conversing with the sophists. In my opinion, this description contains authentic information concerning Indian ascetics but with some Cynic colouring.

> "Onesikritos says that he was sent to converse with these sophists. For Alexander had heard that the men went about naked, practised endurance, and were held in highest honour, but that they would not travel to others when summoned, but enjoined that others come to them if they wanted to take part in what was done or said by them. This being the case, since it did not seem appropriate for Alexander to visit them, nor for them to be compelled against their will to do anything contrary to their customs, he says that he was sent himself. He came across 15 men 20 stades (2.2 miles) from the city, each standing or sitting or lying naked in a different position, motionless until evening when they returned to the city. It was very hard to endure the sun, so hot was it that no-one else could easily endure walking

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[19] Pearson, 1960: 86–87; Pédech,1984: 80–81; Karttunen, 1989: 91.

[20] The concept of four *yugas* is very ancient and familiar to the earliest Indian literature, see: Dumont 1935: 434–443; Sedlar, 1980: 42–49; Arora, 1981: 14–19; Bosworth, 1998: 185–186; Winiarczyk, 2008: 98. See also: Manu, I 68–86.

[21] Winiarczyk, 2008: 97.

[22] Fillozat, 1981: 103–110; Karttunen, 1997: 55–64; Bosworth, 1998: 173–203; Goyal, 2000: 125–128; Arora, 2005: 65–79; Winiarczyk, 2008: 97, 99.

[23] On Cynic influences on Onesicritus see: Wilcken, 1923: 174–207; Brown, 1949: 24–53; Hansen, 1965: 256–357; Sedlar, 1980: 68–69; Pédech, 1984:104–114; Zambrini, 1985: 841.

> on the ground in bare feet at midday. He conversed with one of them, Kalanos, who indeed accompanied the king as far as Persis where he died in the traditional manner by being placed on a pyre."[24] (*BNJ* 134 F17a).

Calanus was lying on stones, naked, and presenting to Onesicritus the theory that the old times were rich and abundant in milk, honey and wine but then Zeus saw that people were becoming arrogant and destroyed the goods. People became restrained one more time and now again they are facing the end of peaceful and rich times. There was also another man, Mandanis, who expressed his admiration for Alexander, not only as the chief of a great army but also as a man who was seeking philosophy and wisdom. Mandanis also talks about the goal of their actions:

> "At any rate Onesikritos says that what he said tended to this, that the best teaching is the one that removes from the soul pleasure and pain; that pain and toil are different, for the former is hostile to them but the latter friendly; and that they train their bodies for toil, so that their minds are strengthened, whereby they can stop disputes and be available with good advice for everyone, both in public and in private;" (*BNJ* 134 F18).

Onesicritus also describes some other customs.

> "He said that they also examined many aspects of nature, including forewarnings of rains, droughts and diseases. When they went back into the city they split up in the markets, and when they met someone carrying figs or grapes they receive them as a gift of the person offering; but if he has oil, this is poured over them and they are annointed. Every wealthy house is open to them as far as the women's quarters, and they go in and take part in the dinner and conversation. Bodily disease is regarded as most shameful by them: one who suspected this of himself, takes himself off through fire: after heaping up a pyre, annointing himself and sitting on the pyre, he orders it to be lit while he is burnt without moving." (*BNJ* 134 F18).

The nakedness of the philosophers, which gave them their Greek name, is nothing unusual, even until today in India – there are various religious sects which praise nakedness as a symbol of possessing nothing; The *naga/nānga* (naked), *digambara* (covered in air, means naked), *khākwālā* (naked but covered in ashes). They perform austere self-mortifications, mentioned by Onesciritus and Aristobulus. In the section of his book of

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[24] The accounts of Onesicritus, Aristobulus and Nearchus follow the translation given in *BNJ*.

laws dedicated to the forest-dwellers Manu says: VI 22: "He should roll on the ground or stand on tiptoes all day; spend the day standing and the night seated, bathing at down, midday and dusk" VI 23: "surround himself with the five fires in the summer; live in the open air during rainy season; and wear wet clothes in the winter-gradually intensifying his ascetic toil" (transl. Olivelle, 2013). Mandanis also presents to Onesicritus the idea of progressive degeneration of society, which brings to mind the Hesiodic idea of the Golden Age[25], but may be as well the reflection of the Indian belief in four Yugas, stages of the world beginning with the Satya Yuga (the Golden Age) until the current era Kali Yuga, the Dark Age.

Visiting villages to beg for food is also characteristic of the philosophers' behaviour, as Manu says in book VI 27: "He should beg for almsfood just sufficient to sustain life only from Brahmin ascetics and from twice-born householders living in the forest". VI 28: "Or, while continuing to live in the forest, he may collect almsfood from a village and eat eight mouthfuls, receiving the almsfood in a leaf-cone, in a potsherd, or in a head" (transl. Olivelle, 2013).

The mentioned suicide committed by Calanus is more controversial.[26] The practice of taking one's own life was rather condemned in ancient India, as Manu writes about the fate of the philosopher (VI 45): "He should long neither for death nor for life, but simply await his appointed time, as a servant his wages" (transl. Olivelle, 2013). But the self-immolation described and witnessed by Alexander's companions, however unexpected and spectacular, was certainly not unfamiliar of in India. Calanus may have chosen this kind of death in accordance with the customs. There is some scattered information about this kind of suicide in Indian literature. *Vaśiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* 29, 4 says: "By entering a fire one attains a world of Brahman" (transl. Olivelle, 1999)[27] (immortality). Most scholars place the composition of *Vaśiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* in the second cent. BC or even the first cent. AD.[28] It is also said in the Upanishads that the *sanyāsin* who had acquired a full insight may enter upon the great journey, or choose death by voluntary starvation, by drowning, by fire or by hero's fate.[29]

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[25] Pédech, 1984: 107.

[26] Chakrabarti, 1973: 76–79; Bosworth, 1998,173–203; Winiarczyk, 2009a: 44–63; 2009b: 115–134.

[27] Arora, 1982: 473, Bosworth, 1998: 182.

[28] Olivelle, 1999: xxxiii.

[29] Arora, 2005: 71.

Nearchus of Crete, the sea-captain of Alexander, whose description of the voyage from the Indus to the Euphrates was a source for Arrian's *Indica,* is considered to be the most sober and credible author.[30] The summary of his account on Indian sophist can be found in Strabo (*BNJ* 133 F23):

> "Concerning the sophists Nearchos says as follows. The Brachmanes take part in public affairs and attend the kings as advisers, but the others study the things of nature. Kalanos indeed was one of these. Women join them in philosophical study, and the life-style of all of them is severe."

Nearchus also described the self-immolation of Calanus in Susa (F4 = Arr. *Anab*. 7,3,6).

The account of Nearchus is too concise to determine of what kind of sophist he is writing about, but probably he saw a *purohita:* a wise, educated man who lives on the court and advises the king[31]. According to *Arthaśāstra* (1.9.9–10), a *purohita* should be chosen carefully:

> "He should appoint as Chaplain a man who comes from a very distinguished family and has an equally distinguished character, who is thoroughly trained in the Veda together with limbs, in divine omens, and in government, and who could counteract divine and human adversities through Atharvan[32] means. He [the king] should follow him as a pupil his teacher, a son his father, and a servant his master" (transl. Olivelle, 2013).

Brahmins were engaged in political or military matters and they also formed dynasties of Indian rulers. What is more, the *Akharas*, the monasteries in which monks were trained for war, existed in India.[33] The information about women ascetics is also true.[34] Undoubtedly, each of them saw a different kind of Indian philosophers, as the city of Taxila was famous for its universities and its cultural life.

The last of accounts of the Alexander's companions is the one written by Aristobulos:

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[30] Pearson, 1960: 112, 128; Pédech, 1984: 213–214; Karttunen, 1989: 90.

[31] Pédech, 1984: 110.

[32] The ritual means for warding off impending catastrophes given in the *Atharva Veda* or in literature and practices connected to the Vedic tradition (Olivelle, 2013: 474).

[33] Arora,1982: 472.

[34] Arora, 1982: 475–477; Megasthenes, F 33 ap. Str. XV.1.60.

> "Aristoboulos says that he saw two of the sophists at Taxila, both Brahmans, the older one with his head completely shaved, and the younger with long hair, both of them accompanied by disciples. They spent most of their time in the market-place, where they were honoured as counsellors, and they were permitted to take whatever they wished as a gift of the wares that were for sale. Whenever they approached anyone, that person poured sesame oil over them, to the point that it ran down over their eyes. As there was an abundance of honey and sesame set out for sale, they made cakes and subsisted without expense. They used to approach Alexander's table, and dine standing up. They taught him a lesson in endurance by withdrawing to an area nearby, where the elder one fell on his back and endured both the sun and the rain, for it was now the rainy season at the beginning of spring. The younger one stood on one leg, lifting a log about three cubits long in both hands. When one leg grew tired, he shifted over to the other leg and continued in this manner for the entire day. The younger one in fact appeared to be more self-controlled by far, for after following the king for a short way he soon turned around to return to his home and, when the king attempted to summon him, told him to come to him, if he wished to gain something. The older man, however, accompanied Alexander's expedition until its ends, and changed both his style of clothing and his way of life as long as he associated with the king. When he was criticized by some, he used to reply that he had fulfilled the forty years of asceticism that he had promised to make. Alexander gave a gift to his sons." (*BNJ* 139 F41).

The description above mentions the two unnamed ascetics whom Aristobulus saw at the market and who later showed to Alexander some elements of their routine as ascetics. The two Brahmins most probably reached the third stage of aśrama system (*vanāprastha*) or, as it was pointed out by Skurzak, the *gṛhastha*[35] described by Aristobulus were accompanied by a group of disciples; often, the Brahmins became ascetics,[36] educated and open to teach and discuss matters with their pupils, without interrupting their brahmanical practice. The information about Brahmanical studentship as being completed after forty years is close to ancient Indian rules of law; Manu says that the stage of studying the Vedas should take thirty six years (Manu, 3.1) and is confirmed by Megasthenes (Str. 15,1,59)[37] who

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[35] Skurzak, 1974: 218, 220.

[36] Chakraborti, 1973: 90–91; Olivelle, 1993: 23–24, 196–201; Bronkhorst, 1998: 20–22; Manu, VI, 38; *Baudhāyana* III 3, 18.

[37] Bosworth,1998: 192.

mentions that it takes thirty seven years. The codices differ slightly when it comes to the exact age of the one who goes to the forest. However, it seems crucial to have children before setting off down the road of ascetic life[38].

The *Alexander Romance* is a fictional biography of the Macedonian king, which started to take shape soon after Alexander's death or even during his lifetime, albeit the first known manuscript of the lost archetype α (referred to as the manuscript A, edited by Kroll, 1926) is dated to the III cent. AD.[39] The legend of Alexander containing both the historic facts about Alexander and fictional adventures, such as the descend to the bottom of the sea, flight in the air in a basket carried by eagles, search for the Water of life, exploring the Land of Darkness, visit to India and the famous meeting with the Indian naked philosophers, was extremely popular in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. There are Armenian, Syriac, Mongolian, Ethiopian or even Malaysian recensions of the legend of Alexander, and as for the European versions of the story, English, French, German, Spanish, Polish or even Icelandic Alexander legends should be mentioned[40]. The episode of Alexander's meeting with Indian philosophers differs from the accounts left by Alexander's companions. The *Romance* presents two different stories. First, Alexander examines the philosophers in a kind of riddle-contest,[41] posing them witty, riddle-like questions: "Who are greater in number. The living or the dead?," "Which is stronger, death or life?," "Which is greater, the earth or the sea?," etc. Obviously, the philosophers answered them all and impressed Alexander. Various attempts to find the origin of the questions in Indian philosophy and literature have been made, some of them quite convincing, as these kind of questions are widely attested in India as soon as in the Vedas, Upanishads and a great epic *Mahābhārata*, and the dialogue perhaps

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38 Chakraborti, 1973: 50–58.

39 On the date and formation of the *Romance*, see: Kroll, 1919: col. 1717–1720; Merkelbach, 1977: 20–47; Ross, 1988: 5; Jouanno, 2002: 13, 26–28; Stoneman / Gargiulo, 2007: xxv–xxxiv.

40 For the complete outline of the *Alexander Romance* recensions see: Stoneman, 2008, 230–245.

41 The riddle-contest has been discussed in my article: Szalc, 2009: 7–25. The discussion is more about the content of the questions. It is clear that the riddle-contest is a literary creation containing some both Indian and Greek ideas rather than a transcript of authentic discussion. The present article discusses the way of life of the Indian ascetics, not their beliefs.

reflects, to a certain degree, the Indian ideas, but this subject lies beyond the scope of this article.[42] The second story describes the king's meeting with the chief of the philosophers, Dandamis, which will be discussed in the following part of the article. My aim is to prove that the realm of the philosophers described by Dandamis reflects in fact the reality of their existence within the Indian society and cannot be considered as pure fiction or utopian scenery described by the author without approaching the text from the perspective of Indian studies.

Alexander's meeting with the Indian philosophers takes place in the third book of the *Alexander Romance* (α III 5–6, β III 5) and might have been inspired by Onesicritus' story, although it is changed and elaborated on.[43] First, Alexander receives a letter from the philosophers:

> "We the naked philosophers address the man Alexander. If you have come to fight us, it will do you no good. There is nothing you can take from us, you must not fight, but ask humbly, and ask if not of us but of Providence above. If you wish to know who we are – we are naked and we have devoted ourselves to the pursuit of wisdom. This we have done, not by our own decision but through the agency of the Providence above. Your business is war, ours is wisdom."[44]

In the β recension of the *Alexander Romance*, Alexander meets the chief of the philosophers Dandamis. Similar to the way he welcomed Onesicritus, Dandamis is lying naked on a thick couch of leaves, and does not stand up to talk to the king. Alexander asks him if they have any property. Dandamis replies:

> "Our possessions are the earth, the fruit, trees, the daylight, the sun, the moon, the chorus of the stars, and water. When we are hungry, we go to the trees whose branches hang down here and eat the fruit they produce. The trees produce fruit every time the moon begins to wax. Then we have the great river Euphrates, and whenever we are thirsty we go to it, drink this water, and are contented. Each of us has his own wife. At every moon each goes to mate with his wife, until she has borne two children. We reckon on of these to replace the father, and one to replace the mother."

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[42] Wilcken, 1923: 150–183; Brown, 1949: 46–49; Dumézil, 1976: 555–560; Stoneman, 1995: 110-114; Magnone, 2000: 59–67; Bosman, 2010: 175–192; Szalc, 2011: 7-25.

[43] Pearson, 1960: 98; Pédech; 1973: 157; Stoneman, 2003: 332.

[44] All fragments of the *Alexander Romance* in translation by Stoneman, 1991.

After the conversation Alexander gives Dandamis gold, bread, wine and olive oil. Dandamis then says:

> ""These things are useless to us. But in order to not appear proud, we will accept the oil." Then building a great pile of wood, he set it alight and poured the oil into the fire before Alexander's eyes."

The lifestyle of the ascetics described by Dandamis may seem idyllic; The whole episode has been interpreted as a rhetorical story of a great king being ashamed of his desire for conquest when faced with the naked philosopher. In any case, a closer look reveals that in fact, the rules of authentic Indian ascetics are not so different from this description. Even their eating routine finds justification in the *Laws of Manu* (VI 13): "Let him eat vegetables that grow on dry land or in water, flower, roots and fruits, the production of pure trees and oils, extracted from forest-fruits". The Āpastamba II 9.22, 2–4 says:

> "Thereafter, he should roam about, living on roots, fruits, leaves and grasses, and finally, on what he happens to find lying about. After that he should sustain himself on water, air and space."

The wandering ascetic should take the food from the village to sustain himself (*Āpastamba*, II 21, 10); he should wander naked and not engage in conversations. The *Baudhāyana*, II 11, 15 says: "An anchorite shall live in the forest, subsisting on roots and fruits, given to austerities, and bathing at dawn, noon and dusk."

Dandamis says that they can have two children, and then they should stop seeing their wives. According to the *Laws of Manu* (VI 2) "When a householder sees his (skin) wrinkled, and (his hair) white, and the sons of his sons, then he might resort to the forest". (VI 3) "(…) he may depart into the forest, either committing his wife to his sons, or accompanied by her." Also Kauṭilya, the supposed compiler of the *Arthaśāstra* (1.2.29), forbids young men to go into exile before fulfilling their duties to the society, just like a famous *rishi* Yājñavalkya, who advises to procreate before going into the forest for meditation.[45] It is also acceptable to practice asceticism accompanied by one's family, but one should restrain oneself of any sexual activity. The Āpastamba II 22, 7–9 says:

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[45] *Yājñavalkya smṛti*, III 45–65; Chakraborti, 1973: 55–56.

> "After completing his Vedic studies, a man should marry a wife, set up the sacred fires, and begin to perform the rites taught in the Vedas, at a minimum the Soma sacrifice. Then he should build a dwelling outside the village and live there either with his wife, children and sacred fires, or alone."

Women could also become ascetics.[46] The ascetics and the forest dwellers should also perform the sacrifices[47] and sustain a fire (see above in *Āpastamba* II 22, 7–9), Manu, VI 5–10). The forest dweller should not accept gifts (*Āpastamba*, II 22, 11) and he can make oblations in the fire (*Āpastamba*, II 22, 12). The mention of Dandamis pouring oil into the fire may be a reflection of another ascetic practice described in Indian codices. The forest hermit should perform the sacrifices five times a day (*Gautama*, III 27), keep a fire burning and entertain guests (*Baudhāyana* II 11, 15).

The analysis conducted in the article aimed to argue that the episode of Alexander's meeting with the Indian philosophers was divided into two parts. The first part was dedicated to the analysis of the accounts of Alexander's companions, the actual historical texts considered as quite credible. The Alexander's meeting with Indian philosophers in the *Alexander Romance* was analysed in the second part of the text. What is worth notice, both of these accounts, even though the latter is considered to be fiction influenced by the Cynic philosophy, show the authentic image of Indian ascetics, forest hermits and Brahmins. It has been claimed before[48] that the Indian episodes of the *Romance* should be examined from the perspective of Indian studies, due to the possibility of authentic content. I believe that I have convincingly showed that the image *gymnosophistai* has much in common with the authentic Indian society. The Greek stories about Indian naked philosophers are for the most part true and close to reality[49] as presented in major Indian treatises of law.

The Indian sources are in great majority complex and difficult to date; the multiple layers of the stories, later additions and long-term process of creation makes it almost impossible to date with certainty various parts of the texts. It is definitely true that a great number of laws, customs and proverbs in the codices has been gathered from the earliest texts and the

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[46] Mishra, 2010: 89–94; Fillozat, 1981: 109.

[47] Chakraborti, 1973: 62–66.

[48] Derret, Duncan, 1960: 64.

[49] Skurzak 1974: 17–25; Karttunen, 1997: 55–64; Winiarczyk, 2008: 97–99; 2009: 38–40; Goyal, 2000: 132.

image of social structure in India is a result of longstanding observation and that the rules concerning the social life in India have been a subject of transformation. What we read in Manu or Kauṭilya is not a matter of any specific king or a short period of time; it is a description of a long process of formation of the Indian society. All of the analyzed codices may describe the ancient customs when it comes to ascetics because they have been an essential part of Indian landscape as perceived by the Greeks. The first accounts of Indian naked ascetics come from Ctesias (*BNJ* 688 F 45. Phot. 72, 30) and Herodotus (III, 100), and back in those writings one can trace the sense of Indian asceticism. There is no reason to doubt the credibility of writings by Onesicritus, Aristobulus and Nearchus. These accounts show the real Indian ascetics as seen by the strangers. I am quite convinced that the rules applied to them in *Āpastamba*, *Baudhāyana*, *Gautama*, *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra* and *Arthaśāstra* were valid also when Alexander met them, because the concept of asceticism in India is really ancient, it was and still is a matter of great importance and tradition.

The *Alexander Romance* for a change, reflects this popular view of the "holy men", ready to answer all philosophical questions, living in accordance with nature in a land of abundance, but it still hides some authentic information about India. At first glance the description of landscape and lifestyle of the naked philosophers looks like a picture of a nearly utopian way of life, but a more scrutinizing look at those characteristics reveals unexpected content. The accounts analysed above show that the Greek knowledge of Indian habits was more extensive than it is usually assumed. Alexander's men not only met the philosophers, they observed them for quite some time and had the opportunity to see various kinds of Indian wise men, ascetics and philosophers and perhaps their accounts can show us a little more of the habits of the Indian "naked philosophers".

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Greek Philosophy and the Wisdom of the East: The Case of 'Lady Wisdom'

Stéphanie Anthonioz & Nicolas Tenaillon

"Lady Wisdom" as she is sometimes referred to, is a key figure of the evolution of biblical wisdom.[1] However, this term is as complex to define as biblical wisdom itself. The complexity of such a personification will be revisited in this article, using Greek that is to say Western sources, while biblical research has traditionally studied the Egyptian and Mesopotamian that is to say Eastern ones. The question of the personification of wisdom in today's research is dealt with in the first part while the analysis of the biblical corpus is limited to the first collection of the Book of Proverbs (1–9). The second part is devoted to the Greek representation of wisdom. The third part is based on the most stimulating fields of comparison, the tension between wisdom and folly, reason and revelation, or acquisition and gift, and at last maieutics or the art of entering into dialogue with the possible influence of Greek sources on the Bible.

Personified Wisdom in Biblical Research

History of Research

What is the interest of analyzing the personification of biblical wisdom in the light of Western philosophical sources? Such an angle is certainly the result of the failure of the historical comparative study with Eastern sources. A brief overview of the history of research shows that wisdom has, from the beginning, been seen in the light of ancient Near-Eastern divinities to which it seemed more or less close. Those divinities are

[1] We wish to express our gratitude to Pascale Carré for reading and correcting the English of this contribution.

Canaanite[2], West-Semitic[3], Mesopotamian[4] or Egyptian[5]. None of these identifications has generated consensus. The personification of biblical wisdom with foreign figures has generated mixed feelings and the differences as well as the similarities have been equally underlined. The closest deity is without doubt Maat, the Egyptian divinity of justice represented as a child of the god of creation and as a principle of the ordering of the world (cf. Prov 8:22–36) by establishing justice (cf. Prov 8:15t16) and holding life and wealth in the hands (cf. Prov 3:16). As was underlined by Christian Cannuyer, "if biblical wisdom has undeniably gained various features from the Pharaonic Maat, it is necessarily through the Egypto-Hellenic Isis."[6] However, the biblical figure is greater than the few significant features of the comparison because of the diversity of the biblical textual references and the great variety of its personification. As for the Canaanite or Israelite divinities, if some hypotheses are attractive, there are no archeological, epigraphic or literary arguments to sustain them. How is it possible to support the idea of an Israelite goddess of wisdom solely on the basis of biblical texts? As a result, the biblical figure defies any comparison even if the precedence of Egyptian texts seems to indicate that they may have exerted some kind of influence.[7]

Faced with this failure, research was steered into two directions. The first one is literary, its aims are focused only on biblical wisdom as a literary personification. The other one is historical; it is focused on the underlying social dimension of these texts. Near Eastern divinities cannot fully explain the biblical figure because the latter is more human than divine. Therefore, women of the Israelite or Jewish society are more appropriate to inform us about this representation. Historians agree to underline women's role in society in the aftermath of the Exile which witnessed the collapse of all major institutions. This social evolution, which was significant during the Persian age,[8] went on during the Hellenistic and Roman

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2 Ackerman, 2008: 1–29; Coogan, 1999: 203–209; Lang, 1995: 61–98; Hadley, 1994: 235–268; Albright, 1995: 1–15.

3 Clifford, 1975: 298–306.

4 Sinnott, 2005: 43–48.

5 Cannuyer, 2001: 17–34; Kloppenborg, 1982: 57–84; Kayatz, 1976.

6 Cannuyer, 2001: 31.

7 White Crawford, 1998: 355.

8 Yoder, 2001; Schroer, 2000; Collins, 1997: 104–162; Camp, 1985.

ages.[9] Women, especially spouses become productive businesswomen as well as revered advisers (cf. Prov 31:10–31). Wisdom as a spouse places a crown on man (cf. Prov 4:9//12:4), bringing stability and fertility to his house (cf. Prov 31:21//9:1–6; 14:1) without being any less desirable (cf. Prov 5:15–19; 7:4). This idealized image of woman coexists with that of the stranger or the madwoman. These negative representations would also have arisen in a context when the identity of Israel was redefined and mixed marriages questioned.[10] A certain number of textual clues (philological ones) and contextual ones (social ones) seem to locate the development of the image of wisdom at a late period, probably during the Persian and Hellenistic ages.

Prov 1–9 as a Source-Text

Before dealing with the Greek sources, it is necessary to delimit the biblical representation of wisdom. Prov 1–9 is here regarded as a textual source which in itself contains all the seeds of later developments of the personification of wisdom. In this text, personified wisdom teaches and speaks autonomously (Prov l:20–33; 8; 9:1–12). She was created prior to the cosmos by Yhwh, and she stayed with him, actively present, or at least she was with him from this moment of creation (8:22–36). Her pleasure is manifest to men, and it is thanks to her that they are made aware of God and are able to lead a good life (3:13–18; 8:34–35). Those are the main elements of such a personification that are diversely found or developed in other biblical texts. Job 28, a text which is traditionally linked to the question of such personification, displays wisdom associated with God, although it is not personified and has none of the attributes of a feminine representation. Surprisingly, the path to wisdom is taught by God himself, it is not wisdom teaching the path to God. The book of Ben Sira, whose prologue dates back to the 2nd century BCE, opens up on the praise of wisdom, a feminine figure created by God before everything and poured on all flesh (Sir 1:1–20). In Sir 24, she describes herself as a divine being belonging to heaven, seeking rest on earth among men till Yhwh orders wisdom to dwell in Israel, which leads Ben Sira to declare that wisdom is none other than the Tora (Sir 24:23; 15:1 cf. Prov 6:20–22). Sir 51:13–20 is a poem which describes the author's youthful quest for wisdom.

[9] Maier, 1995; Camp, 1991: 1–39; Archer, 1990; 1987: 273–287.

[10] Nam Hoon Tan, 2008; Marbury, 2007: 167–182; Yee, 2003.

Although a few erotic nuances pepper the text, wisdom appears more as an abstract concept than a personification. In the book of Wisdom, which is generally dated back to the turn of our era, wisdom becomes an eternal emanation of the immanent or transcendent deity, poured over all creation, turning those seeking it into friends of God. Some of the erotic nuances are the following: Wis 8:2–16. However, it is not associated with the Tora of Israel. In Baruch (3:9–4:4), wisdom is created by God, sought by men and, as in Ben Sira, compared to the Tora (4:1). This gives rise to the interplay between tradition, transmission and re-actualization: if Ben Sira represents a development of Job and Proverbs, Baruch is a development of Job and Ben Sira. Among those various developments, the image of wisdom alternates between humanity and abstract divinity. It is at the same time close and distant, clear and unclear or unreachable. Thus, in Prov 1–9, it may be said that the literary roots of these various developments emerge.

Representation of the Greek Wisdom

Is it possible now to draw a typology of the representations of Greek wisdom? First, several figures can be presented according to the chronology of the various sources: the Sibyl in Heraclitus' works, the daughters of the sun or the goddesses in Parmenides, the Pythia, the *daimon* and Diotima evoked by Socrates, and at last the Demiurge and Socrates himself in Plato.

Heraclitus and Parmenides

Heraclitus (c. 540 BCE) adopts an oracular tone which implies that he belongs to the initiated and argues that "men are unable to understand the Logos, which forever is."[11] This raises the question of the origin of such knowledge. Heraclitus is said to be self-taught, trained by the Pythagoreans, and even one of Xenophanes' students. He is also said to have been inspired by the Sibyl, Apollo's priestess.[12] Heraclitus, who thinks that the world has not been created, cannot therefore derive his inspiration from any transcendent mediation. The Sybil, despite the

[11] Sextus Empiricus, *Contre les mathématiciens*, VII, 132, quoted by Dumont, 1988: 145.

[12] The Sibyls originally servants of the goddess Cybele (Agdistis) came from Pessinonte in Asia Minor in the 8th cent. B. C. E. In Greek mythology, the Sibyl is priestess of Apollo and personifies divination as she utters prophecy in an enigmatic language. They were considered as emanations of divine wisdom, as old as the world and recipients of primitive revelation. See Schmidt, 2000.

enigmatic quality of what she inspires, might represent a certain form of wisdom in so far as her language, because it is cryptic and as a result does not allow any definitive interpretation, seems to be a form most appropriate to the universal motion that he theorizes.

As for Parmenides, in his poem entitled *On Nature*, he states that in order to reach the divinity, he had to be guided by "young girls" who "pointed out the right path to him."[13] They were the daughters of the sun, Heliades "who run towards the light, lifting the veils which concealed their radiant faces." Could we be dealing with a personification of wisdom in this case? Probably not because those young girls (who, according to Sextus Empiricus, represent a metaphor for the senses) are present only to convince the goddess of justice, Dike, to open the doors of knowledge separating night (ignorance) from day (knowledge) to the poet. Is Dike then the one who personifies wisdom? It is very unlikely because Dike, like Themis (the law) is said to be there only to legitimize the passage to true knowledge. Yet, it seems possible that wisdom is represented by a third figure who remains anonymous: "the goddess welcomed me kindly. She took my right hand in hers and told me…" What makes it possible to see wisdom here is the content in the teaching offered by the mysterious goddess, according to whom the philosopher must not focus on opinions because they are fickle, but only on being because it is stable, and as such, is the only possible object of thought. The perceptible biblical echoes are noticeable: the feminine attribute of the veil, the spatial and temporal framework with the reference to the path (cf. Prov 2:8–15; 3:1–12; 4:10–27) and the symbolism of day and night (cf. Prov 7:9). Yet, there is no personification of wisdom comparable to other Greek virtues.[14] At this point, these figures are better seen as "conveyors" of wisdom or mediators.

Socrates and Plato

Like Heraclitus and Parmenides, Socrates (470–399) also presents his "conveyors." In his *Apology*, it is said that the kind of life led by Socrates is justified by the Pythia, and that Chaerophon, a friend of Socrates' went for him to Delphi in order to consult the oracle. The Pythia said that Socrates was the wisest Greek man because he was the only one not

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[13] Sextus Empiricus, *Contre les mathématiciens*, VII, 111–114, quoted by Dumont, 1988: 255–256. Idem for the following quotations.

[14] Stafford, 2010: 71–85; Stafford, 2001.

to pretend to be possessing the knowledge he didn't possess. Socrates therefore believes that the Pythia had called him to make other men acknowledge their ignorance in order for them to grow wiser.[15]

There is another possible mediator of wisdom, although not a feminized form this time, it is Socrates' *daimon* which seems to be a late invention of the second century of our era owed to Plutarch. Plato and Xenophon only mention *daimonion* translated by "divinity,"[16] which speaks to Socrates via a sign, a voice that tells him what he mustn't do (politics). If Socrates never questions the sign, he tries to decipher it rationally. The *daimon* manifests itself by day or night, in dreams. The first instance is mentioned in *Ion* and in *Phaedrus* (242 c); the second in *Crito* when Socrates has already been condemned. This last dialogue evokes a premonitory dream in which "a tall and beautiful woman clad in white" told Socrates that the following day he would reach the fertile fields of the Pythia (44 a–b). Socrates understood that this woman was announcing his death and that is the reason why, trusting the divinity, he did not flee her. In the dream of *Phaedo*, Socrates is urged by the gods to write poetry before he dies. When it appears by night, the *daimon* signals close ties between Socrates and the gods, as if to tell the philosopher that his fate is to join them.

However Diotima, who inspires Socrates in his speech on love in the *Symposium,* is assuredly the closest image of a feminine representation of wisdom. According to Proclus, she belongs to the Pythagorean School; according to Aristides' Scholiast, she used to be the priestess of Lycian Zeus, revered in Arcadia. It is important to note that philosophy is meant as "the love of wisdom," but when the object of wisdom is love itself, it has to be divinely inspired and Diotima is its "mediator." She is Eros' spokeswoman, the God who inspires Socrates the most. Whatever the role of those figures respected by Socrates, it is quite remarkable that they never destabilize the philosopher to the point of alienating his reason. According to Louis André Dorion, "Socrates' docility when it comes to the divine is not irrational, on the contrary, it is one way for human rationality to momentarily get free from its limits and to briefly access to the divine *sophia*."[17]

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[15] The Sybil is old and experimented as she travels a lot whereas the Pythia is young, innocent and sedentary. The knowledge that she dispenses can be all the more trusted as she does not know how to interpret it.

[16] *To daimonion* appears only twice in Plato's corpus (*Eutyphro* 3b and *Theetet* 151a).

[17] Dorion, 2011: 74.

Although it is not at all a feminine figure, Timaeus' Demiurge, the god who created the world by shaping the physical world as perceived by the senses according to the model constituted by intelligible forms, is another instance of a personification of wisdom. Indeed, Plato describes the Demiurge as an intellect (*nous*) equating him to the principle which governs the ordering of the world as advanced by Anaxagoras. However, he adds anthropomorphous features, i.e. that the Demiurge is good and free from jealousy (contrary to Zeus). It is precisely his benevolence, beyond his reasoning qualities, which confers him wisdom.

Finally Plato must have wanted to present Socrates himself as the embodiment of wisdom, as the privileged recipient of the divine gift of *sophia*. This is why, in his *Apology*, Socrates is depicted as strongly attracted to religion as if he had been called by the divinity. As noted by Robert Joly, what is striking is that "the ideal life he imagines beyond is merely the ideal transposition of Socrates' own life" (cf. *Apology* 41 b).[18] The mediation of wisdom here becomes exceptional because it turns into the divinization of the sage himself. Transcendental wisdom is no longer revealed by a mediator but instead, the sage is elevated to the status of a divinity turning the philosopher himself into – as it were – personified wisdom.

Is it possible to draw a typology of those vivid figures? If they appear as diverse through time, it does not seem impossible, to define a principle, as for the biblical figure, a feminine one most of the time, which evolves according to the thought, always pointing to the same reality i.e. to the necessary mediation of a form of knowledge which is not human. In that sense, it seems that the biblical personification of wisdom does not ignore its Greek forerunners, if only for the allusion to the feminine attributes, the spatial and temporal framework, but above all, the mediation of a different form of knowledge.

Comparative Analysis

It is now time to turn to the comparative analysis by starting first with what is particularly conspicuous in the sources, that is to say a tension between wisdom and folly but also between reason and revelation, or acquisition and gift, and at last maieutics or the art of starting a dialogue.

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[18] Joly, 1956: 73–84.

Wisdom and Folly

Plato suggests a ranking of the different forms of folly (*mania*) marked by a double dualism. A first opposition appears between pathological folly (*dementia*) and divine folly, – "there are two brands of folly. One is due to human diseases, the other one to divine impetus which leads us to stray away from the usual rules" (*Phaedrus* 264 e) – while a second opposition is located in divine folly, a source of contradiction in itself. When Plato summarizes his study, he underlines the fact that he has divided divine folly into four types: "Divine inspiration has been related to Apollo, initiatory inspiration to Dionysus, poetic inspiration to the Muses, and, the fourth, amorous folly, has been related to Aphrodite and Eros" (265 b). However, it is possible to oppose them in order to better understand the link they have with wisdom. On the one hand, divinatory and amorous follies facilitate access to *sophia*, on the other hand the initiatory and poetic follies hinder it. Plato clearly thinks highly of amorous folly, considering it the most important one in philosophy: "we declared that amorous folly was the best" (*Phaedrus* 265 d). There is undoubtedly a link between this form of folly and wisdom; that is why praising this type of folly "will convince the sage (*sophoi*)" (245 c). The argument in *Phaedrus* consists in saying that amorous folly is not aimed at consumption but at elevating the soul, when it reaches its aim "neither human wisdom nor divine folly can procure greater good to man" (256 c). This thesis is that of the *Symposium*, the dialogue explicitly devoted to love, in which Phaedrus speaks first to tell Eros that he is "the most ancient god, the most august one and the most capable of making man virtuous" (180 c). But, above all, it is Eros' messenger, Diotima, who inspires Socrates when he speaks to put an end to the conversation. She epitomizes the closest representation of wisdom in Plato's works as we said. She is an educated woman, contrary to the Pythia, and mocks Socrates' language as he was not even thirty years old when he met her. She corrects his mistakes in logic (201e8), she mocks the patronizing tone of some of his answers (202b8) and mentions his young age ironically (205b3) underlining his lack of experience which leads him to be surprised by the obvious (205b3). She even doubts his abilities (210a2).[19] Moreover, Plato presents Diotima as a woman capable of divination who talks about an erotic doctrine inspired, at least formally, by the initiation into Eleusinian mysteries. But above all she understands Eros' teaching. She is therefore not a simple spokesperson:

[19] Wesringer, 2012: 4.

she speaks in her own name; she evokes "her own argument" (205e1) and takes responsibility for her own speech (206b6 and 210a3–4).[20] Here, the biblical echoes are undeniable in the pedagogic dimension of the teaching of wisdom (Prov 8:12, 36) and it is all the more surprising as Diotima should be called "the stranger of Mantinea" in the *Symposium* although she is a Greek woman, an Arcadian who is also the patroness of Athens. This makes it difficult not to see a link with the opposition between wisdom and folly as it is described in the collection of Prov 1–9. Indeed, folly is first introduced in the proverbial collection via the representation of the foreign woman (2:16–19; 5:3–6 and 6:24–26). In chapter 7, unlike previously, she speaks for the first time. But it is the sage who describes the scene, with a break in the poetic rhythm line 7: from his windows, he observes, among the simple ones, a foolish young man who in the street, an open space, walks past "the corner where she stands" and heads towards her house. It is night time and darkness envelops them. She appears, dressed as a prostitute. Loud and restless she cannot keep still as long as she has not found her prey (7:11–15). Once she has found it, she behaves like a prostitute (7:13, cf. 6:26) and speaks piously and suggestively. At that moment, it is clear that she is also an adulterous woman and that her husband is travelling abroad (7:1–20 cf. 6:26). This composition is all the more surprising as it is reminiscent of the appearance of personified wisdom in chapter one, which is also set in noisy public places alluring to the passerby (1:20–21).[21] If the place and the behavior remind us of those of personified wisdom, the context is that of darkness, not light, it is that of death: on top of the speech, this is the major difference (7:14–20 cf. 9:17–20). Last, in chapter 9, the last section (9:13–18), which is often preceded by the subtitle "Lady Folly,"[22] presents a stupid and senseless woman. Like the foreign woman, she is noisy (cf. 7:11), but she is also simple and devoid of knowledge! Like personified wisdom, she stands in the same places, "in the hills above the city" (9:14 = 9:3), she calls the most foolish and the simplest man in the same way (9:16 = 9:4). Art and appearances do not define women or folly or wisdom. It seems that this opposition between wisdom and folly which pertains to speech and content rather than to appearances clarifies Plato's dualism and the tension internal to folly which at times leads to the highest form of wisdom.

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[20] Wesringer, 2012: 8.

[21] See the same vocabulary in Prov 1:20 / 7:12; 1:21 / 7:11 cf. 9:13.

[22] For the origins of "Lady Folly" see Fox, 2000: 304–305; Clifford, 1993: 61–72.

Reason and Revelation

A second tension emerges in the collection of Proverbs between reason and revelation, human acquisition and divine gift. It is not novel in the biblical field, although it has only been identified very late, not before Ben Sira and linked with apocalypticism. Regarding Ben Sira, P. Beentjes has underlined that all wisdom in that book comes from God, which appears a unique trait in the Old Testament and a sapiential "climax" in his own words.[23] Recently B. G. Wright has demonstrated the innovating character of that same book as it has recourse to prophetic inspiration in order to confirm the authority of the author: sages become the recipient of the divine revelation that they transmit in a prophetic manner (Sir 24:25–33).[24] The author goes on to link this phenomenon to apocalyptic literature in which reception of an esoteric revelation is the first mechanism for the legitimation and authority of the text. This tension is also well attested in the Qumran library with different apocalyptic books that accentuate the revelation of divine mysteries, as Enoch (3rd – 2nd c. BCE), Daniel (2nd c. BCE) and 4QInstruction (2nd c. BCE). Those books were held in great respect among the Qumranians as several copies are attested for each of them. Moreover the community considers itself to be the recipient of a particular revelation: whereas the *haniglot* are the biblical laws for all Israel, the *hanistarot* are the truths known by the community and its master by revelation and inspired exegesis (CD 3, 11; 1QS 5, 11–12; 4QHa 7 I 18–19).[25]

Strikingly such a tension is already at work within the first collection of the book of Proverbs. In the opening, personified wisdom cries out in the streets and squares (Prov 1:20); down the crowded ways and at the city gates she utters her words (l:22). She does not withdraw to the desert, to secret places or into the hearts of men. She is not "esoteric" in that sense. She stands ready to meet and be met; she is close to all who would pass by. Moreover, she calls the simple one when she is ready for a pouring out of her spirit (הנה אביעה לכם רוחי)[26], a revelation of her words (1:23 אודיעה דברי אתכם). Wisdom gives herself and in that sense she

[23] Beentjes, 2008: 139–154; Di Lella, 2002: 3–17, who notes that wisdom is both human acquisition and divine gift.

[24] Wright, 2010: 229–253.

[25] Elgvin, 2001: 155.

[26] Compare with Psa 78:2.

may be acquired. Here is certainly the greatest originality of this literary personification: she gives herself. She does so by the revelation of her words so that the very dimension of revelation may not be downgraded in this first collection of Proverbs. Moreover, in Prov 2, wisdom is presented as a precious good. Precious like silver or better hidden treasures (2:4 ככסף וכמטמונים), she must be sought after (בקש / חפש). However if she may be found, it is because she is the gift of God: "For it is Yhwh who gives wisdom; from his mouth, knowledge and understanding" (2:6 cf. Sir 1:1; Wis 8:21; 9:4 and also 1 Kgs 3:9–13). Precisely in this tension between reason and revelation, acquisition (teaching) and gift, she is very close to her Greek forbearers. One may recall that in the *Republic* the future philosopher-king though he benefits from a long and uneasy education was first selected as a child for his good character; he is an *aristos*. This elitist conception would give the impression that, contrarily to the biblical personified wisdom, *sophia* may not be revealed to all and for that reason only the philosopher has the right to rule the ideal city. Moreover, Plato, taught by the sectarian Pythagoreans who dispensed an esoteric teaching only meant for the best pupils, dispensed himself an exoteric teaching, the proof that wisdom by right may be taught to all. On this point, he was faithful to Socrates who, contrary to the Sophists, would not earn money from his teaching and so offered it to all who would take it.

What is the part of human initiative in the acquisition of Greek wisdom? What is given by the gods to the philosopher? Wisdom demands humility when sought after. For example, if one reads in Prov 3:7 "be not wise in your own eyes" (אל תהי חכם בעיניך), one may also read in Socrates' *Apology* that "the knowledge held by man has little value and maybe none" (22c) and in *Phaedrus* that "the name of sage, Phaedrus, is very sublime and only god deserves it" (278c). However after Socrates, the sage himself will tend to be divinized. As wisdom elevates to glory those who practice it (Sir 4:11–19), so the sages according to later Greek thought will be divinized by the contemplation of *sophia*. In this way, the same tension between the inaccessibility of wisdom and the elevation of the sage is noticeable in biblical as well as Greek and philosophical texts. It is clear however that only Greek thought will allow the sage to become divine. So it becomes clear that such a tension may not be easily solved: wisdom as a gift is to be taught and acquired; wisdom as revelation does not condemn reason, far from it.

Personification in the Service of Maieutics or the Art of Dialogue

A last field of investigation seems fruitful in this comparative approach: is the dialogue developed along the first proverbial collection not in essence related to Plato? As analyzed by Sara Denning-Bolle, dialogues have a long tradition; however their function varies according to their context, literary as well as historical:

> "For Plato, the written word offered less than lively debate and conversation. Writing, he says, is simply an aid to memory, reminding the wise man of what he knows already. Writing is the wise man's *paidia* (from *pais*, a child), that is, "play, pastime or recreation." Writing is educative but it does not take the place of listening, hearing, conversing. "And every word, when it is written, is bandied about, alike those who understand and those who have no interest in it, and it knows not to whom to speak or not to speak," says Socrates. "When ill-treated or unjustly reviled it always needs its *father* to help it; for it has no power to protect or help itself" (*Phaedrus* 275d). The best sort of communication is described as the "legitimate brother" of written speech and it is the "word which is written with intelligence in the mind of the learner, which is able to defend itself and knows to whom it should speak, and before whom to be silent" (*Phaedrus* 267a)."[27]

Interestingly, in Prov 7, the personification of wisdom is developed by parent relationships: she is a sister and intelligence a parent (7:4). But the chapter of her personification by excellence is without doubt chapter 8. Set in parallel to understanding in verse 1 she calls and raises her voice and cries aloud reminding us of her first apparition in Prov 1:20–21. She is as one would now expect on the top of the heights, at the crossroads and by the gates, at the approaches of the city. She is not only in the open as already seen, she is everywhere. In the same way, she addresses all men, sons of Adam (8:4) and not only the simple or senseless ones. She then characterizes what she has to say as important, noble and honest, the truth by opposition to wickedness abhorred by her. Her discourse follows by explaining her origins, where she comes from. She is first and foremost, present since creation and besides the creator as *āmôn* (אמון)[28], not

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[27] Denning-Bolle, 1987: 223.

[28] As for this biblical *crux*, two major interpretations have prevailed according to the vocalization: "child" (*āmûn*) and "craftsman" (related to Akkadian *ummânu*). See for instance Hurowitz, 1999: 391–400; Cazelles, 1999: 45–55; Scott, 1960: 213–223. It seems unnecessary here to enter that debate.

daimon (!), rejoicing him day after day and rejoicing in the world created. Wisdom is therefore a sister, created and given birth to. She has learnt by her presence at creation and, knowing the foundation of the earth, she knows its secrets and decrees. For this reason, she may teach all those who are willing to accept and turn to her as sons or brothers. The genius of such a literary tool is not so much the personification in itself but the use that is made of personified wisdom as mirrored by other feminine figures, the foreign woman we spoke of and the spouse in Prov 5:15–23. These women are somehow in dialogue: even if they do not address each other they do address the young man. Moreover such a personification allows for a dialogue with the reader / hearer in so far as when wisdom calls, one must reciprocally call her and raise one's own voice (Prov 1:3) that is to say answer her or not. And as she will turn against those who turn away from her, she turns to those who turn towards her: God's knowledge as we said may be found. This reciprocal quest and invitation to meet allow a relationship to grow between personified wisdom and the one who lets himself be taught. Is this not the heart and essence of Plato's dialogue to bring the one taught to the truth by the process of dialogue? In this way, the reader / hearer identifies with the youth / sage. This use of the tool of personification is obviously echoing Greek maieutics and points to the idealization of the sage. Only the book of Wisdom will cross that border since in obtaining divine life, the sage is divinized not as a god but as a man sharing eternal life.

Conclusion

This analysis of philosophical sources has allowed us to identify a certain number of feminine and mediatory figures of knowledge beyond human grasp. Are these mediators personified wisdom? In all cases, they witness, each in their own uniqueness and context, a philosophical thought in evolution. They also offer here and there a biblical echo, the spatial and temporal narrative framework, the symbol of the way, the opposition between night and day, and mostly the didactic dimension with the invitation to dialogue and to knowledge and truth through this very dialogue. These figures disappear momentarily after Plato. For this reason Plato's philosophy proves most fruitful for biblical comparison. Indeed whether it be Plato's tensions between folly and wisdom, reason and revelation or maieutics, it appears difficult not to accept that the collection of Prov 1–9 may be nourished by Plato's teaching with which it dialogues in a new, innovative and interpretative way, allowing for a new figure of wisdom to arise in the footsteps of its Greek predecessors.

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Paideia, God, and the Transformation of Egyptian Lore in Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride*[*]

Jeremy A. Simmons

How did the Greco-Roman world absorb the powerful influences of Egyptian cults? For Greek intellectuals at least, the exploration of foreign belief systems remained outside the bounds of the traditional standards of Greek education, or *paideia*. In the face of this conundrum, many Greek authors, particularly of the Roman period, perform intriguing intellectual exercises in order to engage with foreign wisdom. An emblematic text of this phenomenon is Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride* (henceforth *DIO*), composed in 115 CE.[1] In this text, Plutarch, a prolific writer who served as a priest at Delphi and was a proponent of Middle-Platonist philosophy, turns his attention to explaining the powerful cults of Egyptian gods like Isis and Osiris. Plutarch writes at a time when such deities were accepted – wholesale or through syncretism – throughout the Roman Mediterranean. Despite their ubiquity, cults of these Egyptian gods still remained in substance alien for the educated, the *pepaideumenoi*, and therefore could serve as challenges to Greek identity. Accordingly, Plutarch views the ascension of these (presumed) Egyptian gods to the Greek pantheon as fundamentally unacceptable. Thus, he proceeds to replace the Egyptian

[*] I would like to give a special thanks to the organizers of the Melammu 8 Symposium for inviting me to speak in Kiel, in particular Josef Wiesehöfer, Sebastian Fink, and Sara Boysen. I would like to extend particular thanks to Alberto Bernabé for his insightful comments after the talk, as well as for all the conversations I had with many other participants. I would also like to thank Todd Hickey, Trevor Murphy, and Carol Redmount for their vital input in the earlier phases of my research. Finally, I would like to extend many thanks to Katja Vogt and Elizabeth Heintges for all of their helpful remarks on perfecting the paper.

[1] Jones, 1966: 73.

characteristics of these deities with Greek ones, transforming them into agreeable sources of Greek wisdom.

In this paper, I focus on how precisely Plutarch achieves such a transformation. As I shall argue, Plutarch employs two strategies to achieve this end. Plutarch's general strategy, I propose, is to guide his readers from more concrete to more abstracted facets of Egyptian myth through Hellenizing and allegorized explanations. More locally, and in ways that may strike readers as *ad hoc*, Plutarch utilizes syncretism and linguistic evidence to appropriate these deities as Greek and buttress his various philosophical transformations. I argue that the main impetus for this methodology is *paideia*. Due to this system's intellectual restraints (which I will briefly explore), Plutarch must prove to his educated audience that Egyptian religion actually promotes canonical, *Greek* conceptions of the divine. In a way, by proving the inherent Greekness of foreign ideas and removing any foreign additives, Plutarch can successfully market his conclusions as articles of Greek knowledge. As a result of Plutarch's conversions, the goddess Isis becomes integrated into Greek language and thought. Plutarch provides a Greek ancestry – and Greek meaning – for her name.

Egypt and *Paideia*

Paideia served a critical role in the formation of a Greek identity in the Roman period. With the reality of Roman domination over the geographic entity of *Hellas*, *paideia* allowed for a standardized Hellenic identity to shift, as Whitmarsh puts it, "into the realm of the imaginary."[2] The athleticism of the *gymnasion* promoted in previous generations gave way to the learning of canonical texts from the Classical past, providing a new medium for a "symbolic" Greekness.[3] *Hellēnismos* [Ἑλληνισμός], or this "Greekness," did not refer to ethnic traits or country of origin, but rather the embodiment of particular virtues, such as *praiotēs* [πρᾳότης] ("gentleness"), *sōphrosynē* [σωφροσύνη] ("self-control"), and *philantrōpia* [φιλανθρωπία] ("benevolence"). These virtues could only be attained

[2] Whitmarsh, 2001: 21; Hall, 2002: 221.

[3] Brenk, 2005: 61–62. This is not to say that the physical education of previous generations disappeared entirely. For more on physical gymnastic education in conjunction with *paideia*, see Van Nijf, 2004.

through an education geared toward their acquisition, namely *paideia*.[4] Thus, particularly in the Second Sophistic period, the superior status of "Hellene" [Ἕλλην] became synonymous with those who were educated in Greek knowledge, the *pepaideumenoi* [πεπαιδευμένοι]; and exclusion from a Greek identity was largely determined by these intellectual standards.

Paideia therefore oriented Plutarch's intellectual pursuits – after all, he both was reared through this educational system and contributed to it as scholar. Plutarch is clearly well read, particularly in philosophical texts, and readily refers to these sources in order to promote his interpretations (see below). But more importantly, he also explicitly praises *paideia* itself in many of his works. Plutarch voices his strong support of these educational practices in his *Parallel Lives*, in which he evaluates Greeks and even Romans based on how well they internalize Greek *nomoi*.[5] In fact, in treatises like *De virtute morali*, *Mulierum virtutes*, and possibly *De liberis educandis* (Pseudo-Plutarchan), Plutarch states that education – *paideia* – serves as the sole means of balancing the rational and irrational parts of the soul.[6] Thus, *paideia* guided Plutarch's upbringing and philosophical pursuits, a fact that he is particularly eager to promote. However, the priority of Greek wisdom espoused by such a system becomes problematic with the increasing awareness of foreign claims to wisdom.

In many ways, Egyptian wisdom constantly bypassed the defenses of *paideia* intended to preserve the validity of *Hellēnismos*. Mythological wise men and philosophers alike, including Orpheus, Homer, Pythagoras, Solon, Eudoxos, and Plato (according to authors like Diodorus Siculus), were all believed to have studied from the primordial and secretive wisdom of Egyptian priesthoods.[7] According to biographical and doxographical sources, those who are deemed to be *sophoi* and *sophistai*, or "wise men," follow a pattern of travel and acquisition of esoteric knowledge in the East, upon which they return to Greece and expound their newfound wisdom, or *sophia*, in aphoristic form.[8] Plato, the figurehead of Plutarch's philosophical beliefs, regularly engages in allegory favorable to the

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4 Whitmarsh, 2001: 21.

5 Swain, 1996: 140; Whitmarsh, 2001: 118; Richter, 2011: 216.

6 Swain, 1996: 140.

7 Diod. 1.98.1–1.98.10. See Pritchard, 1995: 25; Richter, 2011: 194–195, 205.

8 For more on the patterns of behavior associated with Greek wise men and sages, see Martin, 1998: 108–128; Kurke, 2006: 19–21.

Egyptians and even values the regular proportions of the Egyptian arts.[9] Historical authors like Herodotus and Hecateus had long written authoritative texts on the Egyptians that confirmed them as the sources of wisdom and conceptions of the divine, utilizing syncretism to bridge cultural divides.[10] Manetho, the great Egyptian historian and most likely Plutarch's main "Egyptian" source in *DIO*, chronicled the histories of Egypt to aid in the transition of power to the Ptolemies. By Plutarch's time, fascination with Egyptian culture had reached a level of so-called "Egyptomania." Emperors, authors, and writers of graffiti reflect the allure motivating their travels to Egypt, a fusion of fascination with Egyptian ways, desire for grain, and a vigorous loathing of the indigenous population.[11] In fact, the worship of the universal goddess Isis (*Pantheios*) and Serapis and artistic

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[9] Plato, *Timaeus* 24e–25d. (Myth of Atlantis), *Phaedrus* 274c–275b. (Origin of Writing), etc.; for more on Plato's references to Egyptian art, see Davis, W., 1979: "Plato on Egyptian Art". *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 65. The purpose of Plato's supposed trip to Egypt (according to Diodorus Siculus) was to learn mathematics and astronomy from the Egyptians (1.96). Plato probably holds Egyptian wisdom in such high esteem because Egypt was considered to be the unchanging source of mathematics and empirically derived proportions (reflected in art and music), which Plato discusses at length (Davis, 1979: 124; Pritchard, 1995: 23–38, 53–55; Fowler, 1999: 279–302; Vasunia, 2001: 213). For more on mathematics in Plato, see Pritchard, 1995.

[10] e.g., Hdt. 2.5ff.

[11] Smelik / Hemelrijk, 1984: 1930–1955.; Frankfurter, 1998: 14; Brenk, 1999: 234; Richter, 2011: 195. The Roman fascination with Egypt is first reflected in Cestius' Pyramid in Rome (constructed near the end of the first century BCE) and the placement of Egyptian obelisks in Rome following the Battle of Actium. As Richter has precisely stated: "certainly, as the Greco-Roman graffiti from Egypt and the immense popularity of Egyptian and Egyptianizing cults and art throughout the empire attests, Egypt maintained its status and mystique for the vast majority of the population of the empire" (Richter, 2011:195). Visits to Egypt were also popular: attractions included the great temples at Karnak and Luxor, the Valley of the Kings, and the Colossi of Memnon (actually of Amenhotep III) (Łajtar, 2012: 184). Famous tourists to the Egyptian Thebaid include Strabo (with the *praefectus* Aelius Gallus), the Julio-Claudian Germanicus, and Emperors Hadrian (130/131 CE), Septimius Severus (199–200 CE), and possibly Caracalla (Versluys, 2002: 7; Łajtar, 2012: 183). Of those who tagged these sites with graffiti, "many are known only by name, where they left a graffito or *proskynema* to record their visit" (Versluys, 2002: 7; Łajtar, 2012: 183). However, the early emperors were reluctant to accept Egyptian cults back in Rome even as they depicted themselves in the guise of pharaoh in Egypt – Domitian was the first emperor to truly import Egyptian cults to Rome (Smelik / Hemelrijk, 1984: 1934).

motifs vaguely classified as "Nilotic scenes" were widespread throughout the Roman world and had even penetrated the very center of Greek religiosity, Delphi.[12]

Although "Greekness" was theoretically accessible to anyone who underwent *paideia*, I believe that the prominence of Egyptian wisdom could be viewed as hostile to Greek educational practices. I understand this to be a natural consequence of the promotion of a closed intellectual system: in name, considerations of foreignness were rendered moot because of a corrective educational system of *paideia*; but in practice, an increasing presence of foreign ideologies within the Greek canon could lead to anxieties regarding a loss of intellectual and thus cultural dominance. Despite the steady self-reflection of the Second Sophistic, this viewpoint is manifest in the first centuries of the Common Era, when the tide of intellectual authority was supposedly shifting. For instance, long before Plutarch wrote *DIO*, Strabo already notes that the people of Cilician Tarsus had surpassed the great intellectual centers of Athens and Alexandria in their "devotion to philosophy" – a statement that could humiliate a strong proponent of Greek education like Plutarch.[13] This anxiety was only exacerbated through challenges to Greek cultural superiority by other Second Sophistic authors, some of whom were of barbarian origin.[14] Even

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[12] Griffiths, 1970: 30–31; Černý, 1979: 138; Frankfurter, 1998: 13; etc. Egyptian cults, like those of Isis, Amun, Serapis/Osiris, Harpokrates, and Bel were practiced "from Maharraqa in modern Sudan to York in Britain, and from modern Iraq to Empúries in Spain" (Bommas, 2012: 431). For a full list of Isis/Serapis cult centers in the Roman Period, see Wild, 1984. Adaptation based on location was key: Serapis saw far more popularity in the Greek world than Osiris, since the Greeks had ideological issues with a "dead" god; on the other hand, Osiris worship had been adapted for the benefit of ordinary people by the Roman period, and some scholars consider Osiris, in his various Latin variants like Osiris *Chronocrator*, to be the main object of worship in Roman Isism; indeed, many of the most notable practices in the worship of these gods, such as the Mysteries of Isis, can be safely identified as almost "entirely Greek" features (Brenk, 2001: 83, 89; Bommas, 2012: 430–431). For a comprehensive look at Nilotic scenes in the Roman world, see Versluys, 2002.

[13] Strab.14.13.

[14] Lucian, born right at the time Plutarch wrote *DIO*, readily calls himself an "Assyrian" while utilizing the Greek language, producing "his own complex identity and literary impulses" (Nasrallah, 2005: 294). In his *De Dea Syria,* he purposefully utilizes ambiguity rather than Plutarch's certainty, providing four plausible accounts of the foundation of the Hierapolis temple and a wildly composite Hera; he further professes in *Revivescentes sive Piscator,* through the mouth of Parrhesiades, that it makes no difference if a

Plutarch's own brand of Platonism was one that came to Athens from Alexandria in the first century CE through his mentor, Ammonius, and thus had an "Egyptian" tinge.[15] In this seemingly dire cultural landscape, carefree engagement with foreign wisdom could further threaten the very foundations of Greek identity.

We have once again reached the conundrum: how can Plutarch, a proud and educated Greek, interact with increasingly ubiquitous Egyptian knowledge without compromising the standards of his educational background? One way to mitigate this tension is to conduct an intellectual exercise demonstrating that foreign knowledge actually promotes ideas permitted by *paideia*. If one could perform such exercises to an extreme extent, he could essentially prove that such ideas are in fact Greek. I believe that Plutarch performs this very task in *DIO*: for his use of Egyptian ideologies – in this case, the myth and mysteries of Isis and Osiris – must be securely contextualized as Greek knowledge in order to be appropriately used. This contextualization, which I will discuss in the following sections, is comprised of integrated strategies, including his general approach, local strategies, and consistent hostility towards Egyptian culture and foreign wisdom already communicated in the Greek literary canon. Thus, in his instruction of the recipient of *DIO*, the Isaic priestess Clea, Plutarch is no doubt enacting what he deems to be the virtuous reestablishment of educational norms and therefore Greek civilization. With this impetus for the work in mind, I shall now address the different strategies through which Plutarch co-opts Egyptian wisdom for his exposition of Middle-Platonist philosophy.

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man's speech is foreign, but rather whether his words are true, while Athens, the hub of intellect in this period, was markedly full of fickle philosophers "hawking" Greekness (see Lucian, *De Dea Syria* 1–16, 32; *Revivescentes sive Piscator* 19, 31). Justin Martyr, a Samaritan and Christian apologist, professes to have consulted Stoic, Peripatetic, Pythagorean, and Platonist philosophy only to find meaning in the foreign cult of Christianity and its identity (Nasrallah, 2005: 289, 309). In his *Oratio ad Graecos*, Tatian the Encritite takes an even more hostile stance, savagely rejecting popular mystery cults (e.g., Zeus Latiaris, Artemis of Ephesus) in favor of barbarian writings, all the while utilizing the satirical style of the Second Sophistic (Nastrallah, 2005: 289, 299).

[15] Dillon, 1996: 184.

The General Approach[16]

The structure of Plutarch's treatise has caused some debate among scholars, with some arguing that the work lacks a satisfying ending. However, a coherent train of thought does pervade the text, as Plutarch steadily progresses from concrete to ever more abstract formulations regarding the Egyptian deities. I conceive of the work in the following sections, as presented in Figure 1. The *proem* (§1–3) gives way to a series of descriptions of Egyptian religious praxis (§4–11). Following his retelling of the Egyptian myth from §12–24, Plutarch schematizes the Egyptian deities: first into a metaphysical hierarchy (§25–31); then as opposing natural phenomena (§32–44); and finally, as a simplistic dualism between the Rational/Osiris and the Irrational/Typhon (§45–52). Plutarch's philosophical agenda comes in full force between §53–67, where the author relates the gods to Platonic concepts. The text concludes with a renewed discussion of Isaic rites in particular. Note that the incidence of syncretistic and etymological explanations occurs throughout the treatise, rather than in a single concentration within the work. Already from this outline we can see a clear trajectory of Plutarch's discussion, as he progresses from demonstrable cult practice to increasingly more intricate philosophical applications of the Isis and Osiris myth, with a scattering of other strategies throughout the work. Thus, it is only after successful *paideia*-driven allegorization that the clandestine rituals of Isis can be properly, albeit briefly, explored.

Section	Stephanus Page	Contents
1-3	*351c-352c*	*Proem*†*
4-11	*352c-355d*	*Egyptian Religious Practices*
12-24	*355d-360d*	*Narrative of Myth and Critiques**
25-31	*360d-363d*	*Daimonology†*
32-44	*363d-368f*	*Physical Explanations (i.e. Moisture/Dryness; Sun/Moon)*†*
45-52	*369a-372e*	*Rational-Irrational Dichotomy†*
53-67	*372e-378a*	*Philosophical Abstractions†*
68-80	*378a-384c*	*Illumination of Isaic Mysteries*

*Syncretism at §3, 12-13, 18, 28-29, 34-35, etc.
†Etymologies at §2, 29, 41, 49, 60-61, etc.

Figure 1: Structure of Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride* (*Moralia* 351c–384c)

[16] The textual edition of *DIO* used throughout comes from Nachstädt, W. et al. (eds.), 1971: *Plutarchus Moralia*. vol. 2. Leipzig: Teubner. All translations are based on Griffiths, 1970, with my own modifications.

Plutarch is exacting in his criticism of particular Egyptian cultic practices, which frame his more technically philosophical discussion. Plutarch does view some rituals in a favorable light, but only those which fulfill particular Greek and philosophical criteria. For instance, he lauds the resulting "divine disposition" acquired through strict diet and abstinence, whose aim is "knowledge of the foremost, lordly, and intelligible being [i.e., Osiris]" (*DIO* 2.351e–352a).[17] Plutarch further subdivides Egyptian dietary restrictions: 1) foods that are prohibited because their consumption results in *perittōma*, or "excess" (e.g., Nile water; pulses; swine); and 2) foods which are prohibited by *deisidaimonia*, or "superstition" (e.g., Oxyrhynchus fish; onions; wine).[18] While the former category can be praised because it harmonizes with the virtue of *sophrosyne*, Plutarch lambasts the latter as ridiculous, qualifying Egyptian ideologies with negative terminology and favoring Greek explanations.[19] And so, while priestly abstention from eating fish publically (7.353d) and the loathing of luxury (8.354a–354b) lack Plutarch's reprimand because they conform to Greek philosophical values, specifically Egyptian theories like the Dictys etiology for the onion's hallowed state and the pig's impure copulation under moonlight remain "incredible" or "misunderstandings" (8.353e–354a.).

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[17] [Τυφών] τετυφωμένος καὶ διασπῶν καὶ ἀφανίζων τὸν ἱερὸν λόγον, ὃν ἡ θεὸς συνάγει καὶ συντίθησι καὶ παραδίδωσι τοῖς τελουμένοις <διὰ> θειώσεως σώφρονι μὲν ἐνδελεχῶς διαίτῃ καὶ βρωμάτων πολλῶν πολλῶν καὶ ἀφροδισίων ἀποχαῖς κολουούσης τὸ ἀκόλαστον καὶ φιλήδονον, ἀθρύπτους δὲ καὶ στερρὰς ἐν ἱεροῖς λατείρας ἐθιζούσης ὑπομένειν, ὧν τέλος ἐστὶν ἡ τοῦ πρώτου καὶ κυρίου καὶ νοητοῦ γνῶσις, [ὃν ἡ θεὸς παρακαλεῖ ζητεῖν παρ᾽ αὐτῇ καὶ μετ᾽ αὐτῆς ὄντα καὶ συνόντα] ["[Typhon] tears to pieces and scatters to the winds the sacred writings, which the goddess collects and puts together and gives into the keeping of those that are initiated into the holy rites, since this consecration, by a strict regimen and by abstinence from many kinds of food and from the lusts of the flesh, curtails licentiousness and the love of pleasure, and induces a habit of patient submission to the stern and rigorous services in shrines, whose goal is knowledge of the first, lordly, and intelligible being, whom the goddess seeks, since he is near her and with her and in close communion"] (*DIO* 2.351e–352a).

[18] Foods not consumed by Egyptian priests include legumes (*DIO* 5.352f), wine (unless in great moderation; 6.352a–352b), fish (7.353c), mutton and pork (5.352f; 8.353f–354a), salt (5.352f), Nile water (5.353a), and onions (8.353e). Plutarch's *perittōma* involves excessive action (e.g., engorging thirst from consuming salt) and the results of said activity, such as acquired physical flabbiness from meats like mutton and pork and general luxury (5.352f; 8.354a). *Deisidaimonia* is a very important theme to Plutarch and is the subject of a whole treatise titled *de Superstitione*.

[19] Whitmarsh, 2002: 182.

Thus theological/philosophical significance – what Plutarch calls the *hieros logos* of Isis ["sacred account"] (2.351f, 8.353e) – is privileged over the rituals themselves, which are plagued by what Van Nuffelen has called "irrational, fabulous and superstitious elements."[20]

Of the rituals that Plutarch condemns, some, such as the cutting of wood, rending of linen, and pouring of libations, are explicitly excluded in *praeteritio* because they are too intertwined with speculative "mystery-lore" (*DIO* 21.359c).[21] Others, such as the animal and plant worship of various Egyptian communities, are too conspicuous to be simply ignored; hence Plutarch brands them as superstitious. In each case, he faults the Egyptians with misinterpreting the true significance of their own rituals: the "weak and innocent" Oxyrhynchites and Cynopolites simply "fail to understand that animals are not sacred in and of themselves, but are rather sacred to certain deities" according to the Greek custom;[22] and the

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[20] Van Nuffelen, 2011: 59–60. Plutarch acknowledges his privileging of significance over practice outright, tempering his discourse with a popular philosophical dictum: just as beards and coarse cloaks do not make philosophers, so too do linen garments and shaved heads not make votaries of Isis; rather, one who pursues "reason" (*logos*) qualifies as a "true devotee" (3.352c). Compare with an exceedingly similar Stoic sentiment in Seneca's *Epistulae ad Lucilium*: *asperum cultum et intonsum caput et neglegentiorem barbam et indictum argento odium et cubile humi positum et quidquid aliud ambitionem perversa via sequitur evita* ["avoid repellent attire, unkempt hair, slovenly beard, open scorn of silver dishes, a couch on the bare earth, and any other perverted forms of self-display"] (1.5.2). Another interesting parallel can be found at Lucian's *De mercede conductis* 24, where the author criticizes hiring a philosopher's mere beard and cloak instead of his words (see Nasrallah, 2005: 297).

[21] ἐῶ δὲ τομὴν ξύλου καὶ σχίσιν λίνου καὶ χοὰς χεομένας διὰ τὸ πολλὰ τῶν μυστικῶν ἀναμεμῖχθαι τούτοις ["I leave out the cutting of wood, the rending of linen, and poured out libations because a load of mysticism is intermixed with these acts"] (*DIO* 20.359c).

[22] *DIO* 71.379e–379f; Richter, 2001: 208–209. Animal worship, popular as early as the Predynastic period, saw a huge resurgence in the late stages of Egyptian religion – a return to older practices further catalyzed by the increase of Hellenic praxis in Egypt (Černý, 1979: 144; Silverman, 1991: 10; Taylor, 2003: 356; Lloyd, 2003: 384; Peacock, 2003: 429). During the Ptolemaic period, "Greeks also participated in animal cults, e.g., that of the crocodile-gods Souchos and Pnepheros, the falcon-god Harbaithos and the feline-god Bubastis" – gods "not suitable for hellenization" (Smelik / Hemelrijk, 1984: 1889). As part of their cooperation with local religious traditions, the Ptolemaic rulers supported such worship, whether by enforcing punishment for harming a sacred animal or paying homage to them directly (Smelik / Hemelrijk, 1984: 1892–1893). Roman emperors continue to honor sacred animals while in Egypt, such as the Apis bull, as did

"gloomy rites" and "bewailing" of "dying" plants as deities stem from a misapprehension of crops as "gods."[23] Rather than address the popularity of animal worship and "dying and rising god" cults in Egypt, Plutarch holds Egyptian misinterpretation responsible for rampant religious perversion, advising the proper course between "atheism" and "superstition."[24] Thus, the establishment of Egyptian superstitious error first justifies and then confirms the need for the more radical transformations at the heart of the work.

Following his critical examination of the Isis and Osiris myth, Plutarch proceeds to offer a philosophical reconstruction of the events that the myth ascribes to these divinities (see Figure 2). He reinterprets them within a metaphysical scheme fundamentally shaped by what one might call philosophical monotheism, where the Divine is the singular divinity or divine nature.[25] Accordingly, Plutarch suggests that the events

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the population of Roman Egypt (Smelik / Hemelrijk, 1933–1938). Many tourists visited to see animal worship in action (Smelik / Hemelrijk, 1984: 1940). Clearly, Plutarch subscribed to the common view that the Egyptians were "barbarians for their traditional worship of animal gods – this view, obviously, did not take into consideration the fact that many Greek gods also took the form of animals" (Capponi, 2011: 42). He later acknowledges such worship as mere assuagement of Typhon, whose soul is assigned to the beasts because of his irrational and bestial nature (*DIO* 73.380c).

[23] εὖ μὲν οὖν Ξενοφάνης ὁ Κολοφώνιος ἠξίωσε τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους, εἰ θεοὺς νομίζουσι, μὴ θρηνεῖν, εἰ δὲ θρηνοῦσι, θεοὺς μὴ νομίζειν ["rightly did Xenophanes of Colophon insist that the Egyptians, if they believed these to be gods, should not lament them; but if they lamented them, they should not believe them to be gods"] (*DIO* 70.379a–379b). Plutarch uses the playful example of buying "Plato" instead of "a book of Plato" (*DIO* 70.379a). For Plutarch's scientific position on plants, see Jiménez, 2012: 161.

[24] *DIO* 9.354b; 11.355d. At *DIO* 70.379a–71.379c, Plutarch briefly discusses the possible locations of Osiris' tomb(s), though cannot narrow the field beyond Thinis/Abydos, Memphis, an island near Philae, Busiris, and the Ptolemaic Taphosiris (Griffiths, 1970: 365–368; Brenk, 2001: 84). While many of these locales were considered to be the burial place of Osiris even in Egyptian sources, Plutarch prefers the last choice, though this assessment is largely based on etymological tactics, i.e., τάφος ["tomb"] + Ὄσιρις [Osiris] (*DIO* 71.379c).

[25] Van Nuffelen, 2011: 158. Stoic divine "breath" (*pneuma*) and Platonic notions of divinity (*theos, logos, to theion*) appear throughout in the treatise (*DIO* 1.351d, 40.367c, 45.369a, 75.381b; see Griffiths, 1970: 19). Even the Greek gods must face such treatment in the Plutarchan corpus, as in *De E apud Delphos*, where Plutarch advises the reader against simply accepting Apollo as the Sun; instead, Plutarch advises us to ascend even higher to behold the latent Divine masked by the godhead (*De E apud Delphos* 393d–394c).

surrounding Isis and Osiris are "the experiences of neither gods nor men, but of great spirits," or *daimones megaloi* (*DIO* 25.360d).[26] These spirits do not possess the unmixed form of the Divine but are more powerful than men; they have a share of the soul and the corporeal; and thus, they serve as intermediaries between gods and mortals through mysteries and oracles.[27] Such an interpretation aims to justify the approved worship of Isis and Osiris without compromising the Divine through contact with matter.[28] Yet, the scheme becomes more complicated, as Isis and Osiris are promoted to gods following their victory over Typhon in a manner similar to Heracles and Dionysus (27.361e).[29] The validity of this model rests entirely on the tenuous supposition of the dual nature of Isis and Osiris as simultaneously gods and *daimones*, by which Plutarch dismisses the Egyptian conception of these figures as purely supreme deities.[30] Nevertheless, this model allows the conflict between rival *daimones*, not the Greek gods, to be the source of negative forces in the world; it validates the Greek pantheon, or rather the Greek Divine, as superior.[31]

This rivalry of spirits lays the groundwork for a more simplistic dichotomy of rational and irrational forces. Proponents of Alexandrian Platonism, such as Eudorus, had already proposed a dichotomy of conflicting subordinate facets in the nature of the One (εἷς [*heis*]), the Divine:[32] the first was deemed "ordered, determinate, knowable, masculine, right, odd-numbered, light (φῶς [*phōs*])"; the latter "disordered, indeterminate, unknowable, feminine, left, even-numbered, darkness (σκότος [*skotos*])."[33] In *DIO*, Plutarch extends this doctrinal conception to the Egyptian *daimones*

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[26] μήτε θεῶν παθήματα μήτ' ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλὰ δαιμόνων μεγάλων (*DIO* 25.360d).

[27] *DIO* 25.360e, 26.261c. Plutarch heavily relies on Plato, Pythagoras, Xenocrates, and Chrysippos in this passage.

[28] Van Nuffelen, 2011: 166–167. Plutarch's presentation of *daimones* comes in "its best light," whereas many of his other works treat the entity in a variety of contradicting ways (Brenk, 1973: 11).

[29] ἐκ δαιμόνων ἀγαθῶν δι' ἀρετὴν εἰς θεοὺς μεταβαλόντες, ὡς ὕστερον Ἡρακλῆς καὶ Διόνυσος ["transforming through their excellence from good *daimones* to gods, just as Herakles and Dionysus later on"] (*DIO* 27.361e).

[30] "The crucial thing is that Isis and Osiris are both daimons and gods" (Chlup, 2000: 151–152).

[31] Griffiths 1967: 87–88.

[32] For the shift from the neuter One [ἕν] to the masculine εἷς in philosophical discourse, see Brenk, 2006: 37.

[33] Brenk, 2006: 31.

of his treatise. And so, while good *daimones* consecrate rituals to which Plutarch ascribes some philosophical merit (e.g., avoidance of *perittōma*), Plutarch's "superstition" is concerned with irrational spirits who could disrupt the cosmic hierarchy, misleading men into false acts of piety.[34] As opposed to his siblings who receive the honors of gods, Typhon must "pay the penalty" for "ill deeds" wrought against the whole world and for spreading confusion onto all things (*DIO* 27.361d).[35] Importantly, Typhon's association with pure evil as presented in *DIO* lacks consideration for the multiplicity of Egyptian views of Seth. Seth is a vital force that reconciles with Horus, aiding Re in the nightly destruction of Apophis and serving as chief god in many locales during the Roman Period, most notably Kom Ombo (as Seth-Amun).[36] Even Socrates, in a moment of self-reflection in Plato's *Phaedrus*, muses whether he is a "a beast more complicated and furious" than Typhon, which suggests a more nuanced conception of the deity: Typhon is a complex, aggressive, animalistic monstrosity, but

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[34] Van Nuffelen, 2011: 167.

[35] Plutarch highlights such punishment in the form of Egyptians' hatred of the god, which inspires their humiliation of red-headed people and their killing of asses (see *DIO* §30–32, 49–50). As part of his hate-devotion in Egypt, Seth seems to have been in some capacity "the object of curses – by making and immolating his name or image, by portraying him bound or speared, by reciting his destruction of represent the decimation of chaotic 'foreign' elements in the cosmos" (Frankfurter, 1998: 112; te Velde, 1967: 115–118).

[36] Frankfurter, 1998: 112–113; te Velde, 1967: 134. At Kom Ombo, Seth was even combined with the creator god Amun to form Seth-Amun, indicating his supreme status (te Velde, 1967: 134). Furthermore, many of Seth's attributes resemble those of other protective gods like Tutu and Petbe-Nemesis (Frankfurter, 1998: 114–115). Seth's popularity in the oases of the Egyptian desert no doubt correlates to his association with the chaotic wilderness. "Indeed, enough tantalizing references to Seth-Typhon have come out of the Roman Fayyum and Nile Valley that it seems impossible that Egyptians of this period could have regarded this god merely as the object of execration. A Fayyum temple keeps among its collection of votive figurines a small image of Seth. The image may well have resembled a figure of Typhon recalled in Hermopolis, represented as a falcon fighting with a snake. Both figures were probably designed to function as apotropaia … and so also the festival 'regarding the Typhonians' in the second-century Dendara would have provided participants with the ritual opportunity either to execrate Seth as harbinger of evils or the placate him as controller of them. At the same time Ombos and an obscure 'village of Seth' in the Fayyum may actually have venerated Seth as the chief local deity" (Frankfurter, 1998: 113–114).

not one of unmitigated villainy; in fact, he can prove useful in forms of philosophical self-reflection, as noted by several scholars.[37]

Discrediting all of these positive associations, Plutarch never provides an opportunity for compromise. Isis (as "Nature") continually strives for a wholly positive Osiris, rather than succumb to the ills of Typhon.[38] Furthermore, he painstakingly charts this model onto the natural world, contrasting moisture as Osiris and the dryness of Typhon (*DIO* 32.363d–34.364e), and posits Osiris as the Sun despite Egyptian claims to the contrary (41.367c–367e).[39] But most importantly, Plutarch extends this natural opposition to a conflict of rational and irrational forces made manifest in the soul:

> ἐν μὲν οὖν τῇ ψυχῇ νοῦς καὶ λόγος ὁ τῶν ἀρίστων πάντων ἡγεμὼν καὶ κύριος Ὄσιρις ἐστιν, ἐν δὲ γῇ καὶ πνεύμασι καὶ ὕδασι καὶ οὐρανῷ καὶ ἄστροις τὸ τεταγμένον καὶ καθεστηκὸς καὶ ὑγιαῖνον ὥραις καὶ κράσεσι καὶ περιόδοις Ὀσίριδος ἀπορροὴ καὶ εἰκὼν ἐμφαινομένη· Τυφὼν δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ παθητικὸν καὶ τιτανικὸν καὶ ἄλογον καὶ ἔμπληκτον, τοῦ δὲ σωματικοῦ τὸ ἐπίκηρον καὶ νοσῶδες καὶ ταρακτικὸν ἀωρίαις καὶ δυσκρασίαις καὶ κρύψεσιν ἡλίου καὶ ἀφανισμοῖς σελήνης οἷον ἐκδρομαὶ καὶ ἀφηνιασμοὶ [καὶ] Τυφῶνος.

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[37] σκοπῶ οὐ ταῦτα ἀλλ᾽ ἐμαυτόν, εἴτε τι θηρίον ὂν τυγχάνω Τυφῶνος πολυπλοκώτερον καὶ μᾶλλον ἐπιτεθυμμένον, εἴτε ἡμερώτερόν τε καὶ ἁπλούστερον ζῷον, θείας τινὸς καὶ ἀτύφου μοίρας φύσει μετέχον ["I look not into them but into my own self: Am I a beast more complicated and furious than Typhon, or am I a tamer, simpler animal with a share in a divine and gentle nature?"] (Plato, *Phaed.* 230a; translation based on Nehamas / Woodruff, 1995, with my own modifications). For more on Plato's use of Typhon, see Werner 2012: 35–43; Moore, 2017: 97–101.

[38] Griffiths, 1967: 87; Brenk, 2012: 78

[39] διὸ καὶ καταφρονεῖν ἄξιόν ἐστι τῶν τὴν ἡλίου σφαῖραν Τυφῶνι προσνεμόντων, ᾧ λαμπρὸν οὐδὲν οὐδὲ σωτήριον οὐδὲ τάξις οὐδὲ γένεσις οὐδὲ κίνησις μέτρον ἔχουσα καὶ λόγον, ἀλλὰ τἀναντία προσήκει. ["for this reason just ridicule attaches to those who assign the ball of the sun to Typhon, who has nothing radiant or protective about him, nor has he order or creation or movement which has measure or reason [*logos*], but rather the opposite."] (*DIO* 51.372a (cf. 371f–372d). Plutarch discredits any association between Seth, the Sun (Re) and balance, despite clear parallels with these concepts in the Egyptian viewpoint. In fact, Plutarch establishes links between Osiris and the Sun and states that Osiris helped Zeus (instead of Re) defeat Apophis (*DIO* 36.365d; 51.371f–372a). However, the connection to the Sun is qualified by its symbolic connection to the Good and Being (*DIO* 51.371f–372a).

> "And so, in the soul, Intelligence and Reason, the ruler and lord of everything that is best, is Osiris; in the earth and wind and water and the heavens and stars, that which is ordered, established, and healthy by the seasons, temperatures, and revolutions, is the emanation of Osiris and his reflected image. But Typhon is that part of the soul which is impressionable, titanic,[40] irrational and impulsive, and the part of the body which is perishable, sickly, and agitated by abnormal seasons, bad temperatures, eclipses of the sun, and disappearances of the moon – as it were, charges and rebellions of Typhon" (*DIO* 49.371a–371b).

Through this, Plutarch establishes a philosophical dichotomy of rational and irrational forces – versions of which can be seen in Middle-Platonist, Aristotelian, Pythagorean, and even Zoroastrian thought.[41] While compatible belief systems like those of the Persians are discussed in a favorable light, Plutarch's motivation for ideological acrobatics remains wholly transparent: to demonstrate the priorities of Greek philosophy

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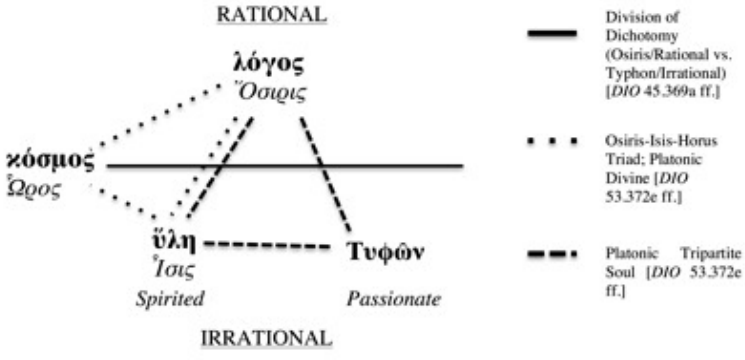
[40] The use of the word "titanic" could refer to a Hellenic interpretation of the myth of Osiris. Notably, Diodorus Siculus recounts that the Egyptians believe that the Titans dismembered Osiris, hiding various pieces in addition to the discarded phallus, and that Isis defeated the Titans and assembled the scattered body parts (4.6.3). The similarities to the death of Dionysus Zagreus at the hands of the Titans no doubt lend to a conflation of mythologies in Diodorus (Burkert, 1985: 298). Thanks to Alberto Bernabé for suggesting this textual interplay.

[41] Griffiths, 1967: 87; cf. Plutarch's explanation of Pythagorean "Table of Opposites," *DIO* 48.370e; for the Platonic-Aristotelian hybrid model of the soul, see Lanzillotta, 2012: 8; Plutarch presents a similar oversimplification of the exceedingly complex religious system of Zoroastrianism at *DIO* 46.369e–47.370c namely to reinforce an idealistic dualism (see Chlup, 2000: 151). Ὡρμάζης no doubt refers to the Avestan Mazda Ahura (Old Persian Ahuramazda, Mid. Persian Ohrmazd) and Ἀρειμάνιος is none other than Angra Mainyu (Mid. Persian Ahriman). The various "aspects" of Ahuramazda (Amesha Spentas) and Angra Mainyu are mentioned, the importance of the Dog-Star (Tištrya) as a guardian is attested, and the "cosmic egg" boasts similarities to the form of Ahura Mazda's universe that is ruptured by Angra Mainyu. Interestingly enough, by the Sasanian revival, Zoroastrianism had become a more simplistic dualistic system between the good Ohrmazd and the evil Ahriman. Mithra, or Plutarch's Μίθρης (not to be confused with the more popular Mithras of Mithraism), is described as a mediator between the two, though this has no bearing in the Zoroastrian tradition. To his credit, Plutarch is right about Mithra's association with vows/contracts and the Zoroastrian fondness for dogs.

over particularly Egyptian cult wisdom.[42] Thus, even before his extensive allegorization of the myth, Plutarch effectively distills the approved components of the story into a philosophical binary of rational and irrational.



N.B. Isis receives both the good and the bad (DIO 53.372f ff.*); Horus [kosmos] is the corrupted form of Osiris [logos] because he is the product of mixture with Isis [hylé] (DIO* 54.373a)

Figure 2: Dichotomy and Relationships between Abstract Entities (*DIO* 45.369a–372e)

Once this dichotomy has been set, Plutarch announces that he will redirect his campaign by reconceiving these deities in Platonist terminology.[43] Through frequent references to Platonic allegory and Pythagorean numerology, Plutarch rearranges Osiris, Isis and Horus into a triad of the Divine. Although such arrangements of these gods have precedents in ancient Egyptian and Ptolemaic sources, the presence of a triad here serves Plutarch's philosophical agenda.[44] Osiris, the "everlasting soul"

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[42] Richter, 2001: 194; Van Nuffelen, 2011: 167; "Plutarch, as in all probability Ammonius before him, seems to have been stimulated in his interpretation of Plato (as perhaps was Plato himself in making the suggestion) by a study of Persian religion. At *DIO* [46.]369e, he bestows high praise on the Zoroastrian theology, referring to it as the 'opinion of the majority of the wisest men.' Just before this, however, he sets out his own view as follows, employing, as was so popular in his time and later, an appeal to immemorial antiquity" (Dillon, 1996: 203).

[43] τὰ ἐπιόντα δηλώσει τοῦ λόγου τὴν Αἰγυπτίων θεολογίαν μάλιστα ταύτῃ τῇ φιλοσοφίᾳ συνοικειοῦντος ["the remainder of the treatise shall relate the theology of the Egyptians especially to this philosophy (i.e., Platonist)"] (*DIO* 48.371a).

[44] Some prominent triads throughout Egyptian history include Amun-Re-Ptah, Atum-

of *logos* (Reason), first combines with Isis, the Feminine, Receptacle all Creation, and the manifestation of *hylē* (Matter); following this union, Isis then distributes *kosmos* (Creation), a mere "imitation of reality" (*DIO* 53.372e–372f).[45] Although she receives both "the good and the bad," Isis actively pursues Osiris to copulate with him, shunning the destructive Typhon and even aiding in the campaign against him (2.351e–352a; 54.373a). Plutarch maintains that the "perfect" Horus, representing the Cosmos/Perceptible World, combats the Chaos of Seth only to cripple it, but not to destroy it, thus confirming his etiology for harmful natural phenomena (55.373c–373d).[46] Yet because Horus is the product of Reason and

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Shu-Tefnut, and Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, which allowed for supreme, transcendental deities (Amun, Atum, etc.) to assume immensely powerful aspects of similar or demotic variants. Other triads based on genealogical lines, such as Osiris-Isis-Horus (Abydos), Amun-Mut-Khonsu (Thebes), and Ptah-Sekhmet-Nefertem (Memphis), merely comprised groupings of separate entities (Morenz, 1973: 144; Kákosy, 1980: 49; Horung, 1982: 97; Silverman, 1991: 41; Assmann, 2001: 179). In a hymn found at the Ptolemaic temple of Isis at Philae, the narrative depicts such a "tripartite universe" ruled by a divine triad of Isis-Osiris-Horus (Žabkar, 1983: 136). Yet, the hymn clearly emphasizes devotion towards the supreme deity in a family trinity, Isis, and has nowhere near the same philosophical implications as Plutarch's trinity.

[45] For the designation of a masculine *Logos*, see Whitmarsh, 2001: 114. Interestingly enough, in her Egyptian context, Isis is described as well-spoken, rational, and the main agent in the resurrection of Osiris and defense of Horus in the tribunal of the Ennead – she seems to embody the concept of *Logos* more than Osiris does (see Lichtheim, 1973–1980: 83). Plutarch even transcribes a Platonic notion of Poverty's pursuit of Plenty and their offspring Eros onto Isis (lacking "Matter"), Osiris ("Perfect"), and Horus (of mixed nature) respectively (*DIO* 57.374c–374d). Pythagorean numerology further buttresses Plutarch's understanding of the Egyptian gods: a trinity of Osiris, Isis, and Horus is manifested by a "Pythagorean three-four-five" triangle, with the height of "three" representing Osiris as the "masculine", the base "four" Isis the "feminine", and the hypotenuse "product" five as Horus – this results with Osiris representing the "beginning," Isis the "recipient," and Horus the "product" (56.373f–374a); Seth is described as born in the fifty-sixth measure, with his shape taking the form of a 56-sided polygon, indicating an association with Pythagorean "evil" even-numbered entities (30.363a; 48.370e); Horus, as the "Cosmos," assumes the Pythagorean number thirty-six, the sum of the first four even and odd numbers, and thus a hybrid of pure *logos* and impure *hylē* (75.381e–381 f).

[46] There is some confusion as to which Horus Plutarch employs in his allegory. Three "Horuses" appear throughout *DIO*: "Elder Horus" or "Ar Oueris" is associated with Apollo, and speculated to be conceived by Osiris and Isis while they were in the womb of Rhea (12.356a); "Harpokrates" is the child conceived "posthumously," namely

Matter, he is but a corrupted copy of the ideal former, contaminated with aspects of physicality (54.373a). This is a significant moment in the text, as Osiris becomes no longer a mere *daimōn* or even a god, but the supreme Divine itself, of which Isis and Horus are also aspects![47] With such dramatic changes to the nature of the Egyptian gods of his treatise, like Isis' demotion from *pantheios* to the mere receptacle for Osiris as *logos*, Plutarch successfully finds precedents for their new allegorical manifestations within the corpus of Greek philosophical thought.[48]

Importantly, the explicit and consistent citation of various Greek sources, the canonical texts of *paideia*, contrasts with the comparatively ephemeral Egyptian material.[49] Greek writers explicitly consulted in *DIO* include Hecateus, Eudoxus, Xenocrates, Chrysippus, Pythagoras, Solon, Xenophanes, Manetho, Phylarchus, Mnaseas, Aritson, Castor of Rhodes, Hermaeus, and of course Plato; other texts, like Apion's Stoic philosophies and Herodotus' *Histories*, are indirectly cited. In contrast, Plutarch never explicitly cites an Egyptian source. Such potential sources could range from ancient Egyptian texts (and corresponding oral tradition), such as *The Contendings of Horus and Seth, The Destruction of Mankind, The Blinding of Truth by Falsehood, Pyramid/Coffin Texts*, and the *Book of the Dead*, to the later Osirian literature of the Greco-Roman period, such as the *Book of Traversing Eternity*, the *Letter for Breathing Which Isis*

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begotten by the "dead" Osiris (with a reconstructed phallus) and Isis (18.358b; 19.358d); the third, who fights with Seth for the throne in *The Contendings of Horus and Seth,* is labeled "Horus, son of Isis." The confusion arises since Plutarch, no doubt wishing to refer to the latter Horus ("son of Isis"), mistakes his birth with that of "Elder Horus" while in the womb of Rhea (54.373b). However, further confusion is caused by the adjective ἀνάπηρος ("ineffectual; crippled"), which fits the "lame" Harpokrates. Yet in the very next chapter, Plutarch refers to this abstracted Horus as "determined and perfect," who fights Typhon (55.373c). Needless to say, Plutarch may have gotten lost within his own syncretisms at this point, while an Egyptian understanding reveals these different "Horuses" to be aspects of the same god.

47 Plutarch insists that Osiris, rather than serving the "misinterpreted" role of lord of the dead, stands "far removed from the earth, being undefiled, unspotted, and uncorrupted by any being which is subject to decay and death" (*DIO* 78.382e–382f).

48 "The sublime Isis of Egyptian myth and Hellenistic cult suddenly is reduced to secondary status […] worst yet, she is treated as Plato's 'receptacle,' ready to receive 'form' or 'forms' coming from the higher principle, represented by Osiris" (Brenk, 2001: 83).

49 Griffiths, 1970: 98–110; 1962: 102–103. For a discussion of Plutarch's possible use of Latin sources, particularly in the *Parallel Lives*, see Pelling, 1979: 75–76.

Made for her Brother Osiris, the *Great Ceremony of Geb*, and the various Hermetica texts. [50] Although Plutarch admits to a trip to Egypt (or rather, Alexandria) in his *Quaestiones Convivales* (5.5.1.678c), many sources in the treatise seem to be told through second-hand accounts (even if lacking Herodotean citation). Even if Plutarch spoke with Egyptian (or merely Memphite) priests during this visit, he would have had access only to snippets of a 2,500-year religious evolution due to the lack of preservation of Egyptian texts.[51] Yet, despite the more limited accessibility of the Egyptian sources even in his own time, Plutarch makes no effort to even mention them, allowing for his manipulation to occur solely within the Greek intellectual sphere. Plutarch validates his gradual transformations with comparanda in the corpus of *paideia*, immediately shunning any inkling of Egyptian interpretation.

In tracing Plutarch's main argument, we see how he progresses from concrete examples of Egyptian worship and the (re)telling of the myth to abstract interpretations of these traditions. Plutarch steadily progresses through daimonological, phenomenological, dualistic, and purely abstract interpretations that consistently force Osiris and Isis into roles familiar in contemporary Greek intellectual frameworks. At every stage, Plutarch earnestly dismisses Egyptian interpretations as false in favor of correct Greek ones, citing a myriad of *paideia*-approved authors and philosophies harmonizing with Plutarch's own brand of Middle-Platonism. However, in order to cement these radical transformations, Plutarch engages in a parallel argumentative strategy – namely, a number of *ad hoc* moves that involve syncretism and linguistic proofs.

Local Strategies

Plutarch's various transformations of the Isis and Osiris myth are buttressed throughout the work by means of syncretistic and linguistic evidence. The phenomenon of syncretism in the ancient world is widespread and demands more elaborate explanation that is beyond the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, the forms of syncretism in Plutarch's work operate to satisfy a clearly Hellenizing agenda through appropriation. Plutarch employs two main strategies: 1) a mere transplant of a Greek god's name onto an Egyptian god; and 2) the intentional fusion of a Greek god and Egyptian

[50] Smith, 2009: 16–19; Bommas, 2012: 425; Frankfurter, 1998: 222.
[51] Pinch, 2002: 41.

deity's respective characteristics. The first category occurs from the outset, with Isis' father labeled "Hermes" or "Prometheus" (*DIO* 3.352b), her (and Osiris') mother "Rhea," Seth as "Typhon" because of his association with chaos, Ar Oueris branded "Apollo," and Nephthys called either "Finality," "Aphrodite," or "Nike" (12.355d–355f).[52] Furthermore, in establishing the difference between Osiris and Serapis, Plutarch claims that it is better to unite Dionysus with Osiris and Osiris with Serapis, which indicates a three-way fusion (28.362b). This labeling, inconsistent and clumsy in genealogy but nevertheless frequent throughout the treatise, allows for the story of the birth of Isis and Osiris, and the later conflict between Seth and Horus, to take place within a Greek mythological sphere – the realm of *paideia*.

The latter form of syncretism occurs in the wanderings of Isis and the Dionysian characteristics of Osiris. Similarities between Isis' attempt to burn away the mortal aspects of the young prince of Byblos and Demeter's divine roast of Demophoön in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* readily appear and attest to the popularity of such aforementioned comparisons in the ancient world (*DIO* 15.357–16.357c). The reference to standard Greek mythology indicates what Richter has called the "hellenization of the Egyptian myth in an effort to make it true."[53] In the case of Osiris' civilizing mission – first separating the Egyptians from wild beasts, and teaching them how to cultivate, establish law, and honor the gods, then spreading a humanizing method throughout the whole world – Plutarch outright claims as a result of these myths that Osiris and Dionysus are the same god (13.356b). Indeed, Plutarch describes the regeneration of Osiris' dismembered phallus, the *Pamylia* festival in his honor (12.355e), and the orgies in honor of the deceased Apis Bull (35.364e–364f) in quite Dionysian terms.[54] In contrast, certain aspects of the Isis and Osiris

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[52] cf. Plutarch's *De defectu oraculorum* 36.429f–36.430a.

[53] Richter, 2001: 201.

[54] In a similar fashion to the Egyptian version, Isis creates a new phallus for the "dead" Osiris in *DIO*, and through intercourse creates the lame offspring Harpokrates (*DIO* 18.358b). Within the Egyptian mythological canon, legend holds that following the dismemberment and reassembling of Osiris, Isis, upon seeing that the phallus was missing, turned herself into a falcon, "and flapping her wings and repeating magic incantations, managed to resuscitate and inflate Osiris' penis, and alighting upon it, had intercourse and conceived Osiris' son Hor (or 'Harpocrates')" (Csapo, 1997: 271). "Several terracotta representations of Egyptian phallic processions survive, though only two have been properly published. Both are of Hellenistic date" (Csapo, 1997: 272). Those

myth with specifically Egyptian resonance, such as the barbarous dismemberment of Horus and the decapitation of Isis, are excluded from the narrative as shameful and utterly useless (*DIO* 20.358e; 12.355d).[55]

Plutarch openly announces his abundant use of syncretism. In Section 66, Plutarch makes the emphatic statement ἡμῖν τοὺς θεοὺς […] κοινούς ["their gods are common to us"], implying homogeneity between the gods of Egypt and Greece.[56] Scholars like Griffiths, Brenk, and Richter, however, have argued that the motive behind this claim is not merely to identify the foreign with Greek equivalents.[57] Instead, Plutarch aims to support what Richter calls the "definition of cultural hierarchies."[58] In effect, he presents the Greek conception of the Divine as superior to that of local opinion. Such an assessment is clearly seen in the following section where understandings of *homonoia* and *philanthrōpia* remain ephemeral, encased in the form of Egyptian perversions:

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participating in the funerary rites of the Apis don fawn skins, carry *thyrsoi*, and dance in Dionysian orgies worthy of Euripides' *Bacchae*. Interesting links between *thyrsoi* and phallic iconography and gender ambiguity in the worship of Dionysus have been made (Csapo, 1997: 260–262).

55 Plutarch also chooses to ignore entirely the homoerotic relationship between Seth and Horus and Seth's "castration" as laid out in the *Pyramid Texts*, the *Book of the Dead*, and *The Contendings of Horus and Seth*. Homoerotic relations in an Egyptian context, much like in the Greco-Roman mindset, find difficulty mainly on the resulting belittling of a passive partner. This view is confirmed in texts like Spell 125 of the *Book of the Dead* and Seth's charge against Horus for illegitimacy due to sexual penetration in *The Contendings of Horus and Seth* (te Velde, 1967: 30–32; Kemboly, 2010: 226–229). For more on the complex castration in the myth, see te Velde, 1967: 30–31. Also cf. *Pyramid Texts* 418a, 594a, 1463; *Book of the Dead* Spell 17; te Velde, 1967: 33–34. In retaliation for the violation of Horus, Isis impregnates Seth with Horus' seed in *The Contendings of Horus and Seth*. The product of this union of Horus and Seth was Thoth, begotten by Horus as the "son of the son" of Osiris (te Velde, 1967: 41, 44). Plutarch claims that if one were to believe these events to have actually happened as recorded in "barbarian accounts" [βαρβάρους δόξας], then one must, in Aeschylus' words, "spit out and cleanse" his "mouth" (*DIO* 20.358e).

56 καὶ δεινὸν οὐδέν, ἂν πρῶτον μὲν ἡμῖν τοὺς θεοὺς φυλάττωσι κοινοὺς καὶ μὴ ποιῶσιν Αἰγυπτίων ἰδίους…Ἴσιν δὲ καὶ τοὺς περὶ αὐτὴν θεοὺς ἔχουσι καὶ γινώσκουσιν ἅπαντες ["there is nothing wrong with this [worshiping crops] if in the first place they ["many boring people"] preserve the gods as common and do not make them private property of the Egyptians … but Isis and gods relating to her belong to all men and are known to them"] (*DIO* 66.377c–377d).

57 Griffiths, 1970: 29; Richter, 2001: 196; Brenk, 1999: 232.

58 Richter, 2001: 193.

> ἀλλ᾽ ὥσπερ ἥλιος καὶ σελήνη καὶ οὐρανὸς καὶ γῆ καὶ θάλασσα κοινὰ πᾶσιν, ὀνομάζεται δ᾽ ἄλλως ὑπ᾽ ἄλλων, οὕτως ἑνὸς λόγου τοῦ ταῦτα κοσμοῦντος καὶ μιᾶς προνοίας ἐπιτροπευούσης καὶ δυνάμεων ὑπουργῶν ἐπὶ πάντα τεταγμένων ἕτεραι παρ᾽ ἑτέροις κατὰ νόμους γεγόνασι τιμαὶ καὶ προσηγορίαι, καὶ συμβόλοις χρῶνται καθιερωμένοις οἱ μὲν ἀμυδροῖς οἱ δὲ τρανοτέροις, ἐπὶ τὰ θεῖα τὴν νόησιν ὁδηγοῦντες οὐκ ἀκινδύνως· ἔνιοι γὰρ ἀποσφαλέντες παντάπασιν εἰς δεισιδαιμονίαν ὤλισθον, οἱ δὲ φεύγοντες ὥσπερ ἕλος τὴν δεισιδαιμονίαν ἔλαθον αὖθις ὥσπερ εἰς κρημνὸν ἐμπεσόντες τὴν ἀθεότητα.
>
> "But just as the sun, moon, heaven, earth and sea are common to all, though they are named differently by different peoples, so it is with the one Reason ordering these things and the one Forethought administering them, and the assistant powers assigned to everything: they are given different honors and addresses among different peoples according to custom, and they use consecrated symbols, some of which are obscure and others clearer, directing thought toward the Divine, though not without danger. For some, erring completely, have slipped into superstition, and others, fleeing superstition like a backwater, have unwittingly fallen in turn over the precipice that is atheism" (*DIO* 67.377f–67.378a)

The celestial bodies, guided in their movements by reason, are common to all, not "peculiar property of the Egyptians."[59] Thus, Plutarch's syncretism is employed in order to appropriate Egyptian deities for his philosophical allegorization. It is these scattered connections that enable Plutarch to liberate the deities of their Egyptian heritage and reveal their wisdom to be Greek.

As his *coup de grâce*, Plutarch utilizes the popular linguistic technique of etymologies throughout his treatise. Many philosophical schools, particularly the Stoics, found significance in determining the origins of Greek words.[60] In this vein, despite almost thirty references to Egyptian

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[59] Cf. Griffiths, 1970: 22, 29, 531–532; Brenk, 1999: 232; Freeman, 2004: 478; Richter, 2011: 207; Lanzillotta, 2012: 11.

[60] Griffiths, 1970: 100. Plutarch refers to the Stoics directly three times (*DIO* 40.367c; 41.367e; 45.369a), and only critiques the school's conclusion outright in their understanding of an overarching, indeterminate Reason (Griffiths, 1970: 85). Yet, Plutarch's loathing of the Stoics can be found in his *De Stoicorum repugnantiis*. In spite of his forthright disapproval, "Plutarch is not averse to drawing on arguments from various corners to shore up his own position" (Van Nuffelen, 2011: 162). A similar practice can be seen in Seneca's abundant quoting of Epicurus in his letters to Lucilius, as he argues

hieroglyphic writing (according to Griffiths) and the fact that the author explicitly disdains the Stoics, Plutarch uniquely utilizes a Greek etymological method for a foreign language, Egyptian.[61] Making use of the Greek transliterations of Egyptian names of these gods (e.g., Ἶσις, Ὄσιρις, and Ὧρος), Plutarch distinctly argues that the original names themselves are in fact Greek. Plutarch makes a forthright claim in the first chapters of the work that defines his entire treatise – Ἑλληνικὸν γὰρ ἡ Ἶσις ἐστι ["Isis is a Greek word"] (*DIO* 2.351f) – and indeed Isis is treated solely as a name of Greek etymology.[62] "Isis" represents "knowing" [τὸ εἰδέναι] (2.351e); a temple to Isis, an *Iseion* [Ἰσεῖον], indicates that one will know of reality [εἰσομένων τὸ ὄν] if he enters with reason and devotion to the goddess, and that the name itself represents "understanding" [γνῶσις] and a "knowing" [εἴδησις] of reality (2.352a). In this, Plutarch defines significant etymologies for Isis, namely γνῶσις or "understanding" and οἶδα or "to know." Later on, Plutarch gives alternate etymologies for Isis: "rushing with understanding" [παρὰ τὸ ἴεσθαι μετ᾽ ἐπιστήμης] (60.375c) and "being" [οὐσία] through an interpolated form ἰσία (60.375d). "Rushing" contrasts the languid entropy of Typhon, as displayed in puns such as κακία, ἀπορία, δειλία, and ἀνία ["evil or ill-going; helplessness or lack of going; cowardice or fear of going; trouble or not going"] – all with –ία ["going"] suffixes (60.375d). According to scholars like Richter, these false etymologies crucially align Isis with Plutarch's allegory, in which she constantly pursues the perfect Osiris, and thus establish her as a particularly "Greek" concept.[63]

Although previously presenting the Egyptian hieroglyphics for Osiris's name, Plutarch claims that it actually derives from the Greek words ὅσιος

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in one case *ne existemes nos solos generosa verba iactare, et ipse Stilbonis obiurgator Epicurus similem illi vocem emisit* ["you must not think that our school alone can utter noble words; Epicurus himself, the reviler of Stilbo, spoke similar language"] (1.9.20). Indeed, much of what seems Stoic throughout the text can also be found in Platonic thought (Brenk, 1973: 7). In the case of etymologies, cf. Plato's *Cratylus*.

[61] Plutarch does occasionally use etymological discourse within the Greek language, but ascribing it to a foreign language, even Latin, is unprecedented in Plutarch's works (Swain, 1996: 140). Though all the names presented in *DIO* are Greek transliterations of the Egyptian and thus have little sway over the actual names of the original gods, authorial intent is clearly aimed at providing these gods a Greek etiology and, accordingly, Plutarch's method is rather successful.

[62] Griffiths, 1970: 58.

[63] Richter, 2011: 217.

["holy"] and ἱερός ["sacred"] (*DIO* 61.375d).[64] In addition, Plutarch also solidifies his previous syncretism of Osiris and Dionysus through an etymological connection between a cult name of the latter and words for "moisture" [Ὗσιρις].[65] In this way, Plutarch creates a linguistic linchpin, securing Osiris as a particularly Greek entity, divine and phenomenal. Plutarch settles on the Egyptian exclamation "Sairei" as the etymology for the god Serapis, and thus claims the god to be "Egyptian" (29.362d).[66] Ironically, although Serapis worship began in earnest with the Ptolemies, Plutarch concedes that name to the Egyptians but maintains Osiris to be a Greek title for the same god (61.376a). Once more, Plutarch has created an etymology that describes Osiris' role in his own interpretative scheme and validates a Greek origin of the concept "Osiris." Intriguingly, while Plutarch acknowledges that Typhon is a Greek word (2.351f), the main discussion of Typhon's etymology regards his Egyptian names, such as Seth (41.367d; 49.371b–371c; 62.376b) and Bebon (49.371b–371c;

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[64] τὸν γὰρ βασιλέα καὶ κύριον Ὄσιριν ὀφθαλμῷ καὶ σκήπτρῳ γράφουσιν· ἔνιοι δὲ καὶ τοὔνομα διερμηνεύουσι πολυόφθαλμον, ὡς τοῦ μὲν 'ος' τὸ πολύ, τοῦ δ' 'ιρι' τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν Αἰγυπτίᾳ γλώττῃ φράζοντος· τὸν δ' οὐρανὸν ὡς ἀγήρω δι' ἀϊδιότητα <τῇ ἀσπίδι γράφουσιν> καρδίᾳ <δὲ> θυμὸν ἐσχάρας ὑποκειμένης ["for they write the name of the King and Lord Osiris by means of an eye and a scepter; some explain the name as meaning 'many-eyed,' since *os* in Egyptian means 'many' and *iri* 'eye'; the heaven, as it is ageless through its eternity, they write with a cobra, and passion with a heart under which a censer lies"] (*DIO* 10.354e–355a).

[65] καὶ γὰρ Ἕλληνες…καλοῦσι…τὸν υἱὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος καὶ τοῦ ὗσαι, καὶ τὸν Διόνυσον 'ὕην' ὡς κύριον τῆς ὑγρᾶς φύσεως οὐχ ἕτερον ὄντα τοῦ Ὀσίριδος· καὶ γὰρ τὸν Ὄσιριν Ἑλλάνικος Ὗσιριν ἔοικεν ἀκηκοέναι ὑπὸ τῶν ἱερέων λεγόμενον ["and the Greeks call…a son *hyios* [υἱός] from water [*hydôr;* ὑδῶρ] and to rain [*hysai*; ὗσαι], and Dionysus *Hyēs* [Ὗης] as being the lord of moist nature, since he is none other than Osiris. And indeed Hellanicus seems to have heard Osiris pronounced "Hysiris" by the priests"] (*DIO* 34.364d). Griffiths believes that the transliteration Hysiris more nearly approaches the Egyptian original, *Wsir* (1970: 429).

[66] ἐγὼ δ', εἰ μὲν Αἰγύπτιόν ἐστι τοὔνομα τοῦ Σαράπιδος, εὐφροσύνην αὐτὸ δηλοῦν οἴομαι καὶ χαρμοσύνην, τεκμαιρόμενος ὅτι τὴν ἑορτὴν Αἰγύπτιοι τὰ Χαρμόσυνα 'Σαίρει' καλοῦσιν ["I, for my part, believe that if the name Sarapis is indeed Egyptian, it denotes joy and gladness [*charmonsynē*], taking my clue from the fact that the Egyptians call the Charmosyna, the festival of gladness, *Sairei*"] (*DIO* 29.362d). This statement is justified by a reference in Plato's *Cratylus* which claims that Hades is a friendly god (362d). The verb σαίρειν is also thought to mean "to beautify or to order" [καλλύνειν…κοσμεῖν] (29.362b). Greek etymologies include "sweeping" and "arranging" [τὸ σαίρειν] to "rushing" and "running" [τὸ σεύεσθαι καὶ τὸ σοῦσθαι] (*DIO* 29.362c–362d).

62.376b), possibly hinting at a solely Egyptian, and thus inferior, etymology for this evil *daimōn*.

Finally, to make these proposals plausible, Plutarch astutely presents a means by which Greek words arrived in Egypt. Rather than succumbing to a Herodotean conclusion that Greek words actually originated in Egypt, he argues that there were countless archaic Greek words that left with the migrations of peoples (*DIO* 61.375e). Some were then transferred back, while others "still" lived as "guests among strangers" (61.375e). Plutarch claims that whenever these words were reintroduced to Greece as "poeticisms," those who spoke poorly of these expressions labeled poets as wielders of "barbarisms" (61.375e). Thus, by claiming that Egyptian names were actually of Greek origin, with knowledge of such a past lost in the sands of time, Plutarch creates a proof for his etymologies. In this culmination of interpretation, Plutarch has found full validation for understanding Isis and Osiris as harbingers of Greek truth, since he has "proven" the direction of intellectual influence not Greece-bound, but vice versa. The fact that even names had to be substantiated in Plutarch's scheme displays his obsession with certifying the Isis and Osiris myth, "universalist" truth, and access to the Divine as exports of Greek ingenuity.

Conclusions

Plutarch's agenda in *De Iside et Osiride* is clear – to isolate particularly Egyptian deities as facets of constructive Greek knowledge. The author's educational upbringing in *paideia* and its lasting methodological restraints provide a clear impetus for Plutarch's own argumentative strategies. Plutarch successfully distills the inherent Greek essence of these omnipresent foreign gods through the application of various transformative mental exercises. He progresses from the most demonstrable aspects of Egyptian religious systems to the most abstract, constantly reevaluating the status of the Egyptian deities along the way. Cultic practice gives way to interpretations of the Egyptian gods as *daimones*; demonology yields to dichotomies of physical and rational/irrational forces; and finally, Plutarch translates these gods onto existing models of the Divine and philosophical concepts such as *logos, hylē,* and *kosmos*. Plutarch further utilizes more local strategies of syncretism and etymology to successfully uncover aspects of Greek significance hidden within Egyptian misinterpretations. These *ad hoc* treatments serve as temporary or iconic buttresses of his main argument, ranging from conflicting divine *interpretatio* to profound statements such as "Isis is a Greek word." Through both long-term and

radical transformations, Plutarch successfully harnesses foreign material and maintains the Greek intellectual superiority espoused by *paideia*.

As Richter has astutely pointed out, Plutarch is by no means alone in his treatment of Egyptian material and foreign information systems in general. Apollonius, Diogenes Laertius, and Philostratus all similarly reject the tradition of Greek sabbaticals in Egypt and furthermore attest that Greece had "always exported and never imported wisdom."[67] Plutarch is therefore unexceptional in his attempt to prevent a systemic shift in the conceived source of knowledge in the ancient world. In light of the long list of apocryphal Greek wise men returning from Egypt with wisdom couched in aphorisms, we might view Plutarch as part of this larger tradition, communicating Egyptian material in a wholly Second Sophistic way. Rather than present alien wisdom in is raw form, Plutarch adheres to a cultural and intellectual imperative to manipulate what is Egyptian into something Greek through the philosophical rigor of a treatise. Accordingly, his arguments in *DIO* make use of many tools in the philosophical toolkit in order the educe the hidden truth for the benefit of Clea, a (possibly misguided) Isaic initiate and the work's addressee.

Nevertheless, why did Plutarch consult Egyptian wisdom if it proved so problematic? Was this text truly a defense of *Hellēnismos* or just a playful intellectual exercise? While these questions are harder to answer than how such an engagement was formulated, the text does reveal something quite compelling: namely, where Plutarch's own *personal* philosophy diverges. While Platonists at large disassociate the Divine from mythological and anthropomorphic deities, Plutarch desires, as Brenk has noted "to combine religious and ritual aspects with the philosophical god of the Middle Platonists."[68] Importantly, Plutarch's transformations serve to unmask the Egyptian deities so as to incorporate them within a comprehensive worldview, not to do away with them entirely: for even as a Greek concept, Isis is still an entity worthy of worship. And so, this work is truly reflective of the mind of the philosopher-priest, treading the delicate balance between Greek intellectualism and religiosity, at times conflicting tenets of *paideia*.

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[67] Richter, 2011: 20, 182–206.

[68] Brenk, 2006: 41.

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Greek Philosophy and the Wisdom of the East. Response

Alberto Bernabé

The topic "Greek Philosophy and the Wisdom of the East" is not very popular in scholarly circles: cross-cultural contacts still encounter much resistance, both among Hellenists and scholars of other ancient cultures. There are, in fact, some reasons for such an attitude: first of all, the amount of useful material is so large and diverse, that it is not easy to organize the whole of it without falling into arbitrariness in the selection and establishment of a hierarchy of the sources; on the other hand it is difficult to combine the expertise in two or more different languages and cultural ambiences; this can lead somehow to superficiality in conclusions.

These risks must be avoided through a rigorous methodology that helps to establish objective and clear criteria for the classification and study of all the materials involved. Significant parallels must be explained without losing sight of the diversity of contexts and meanings that may be more important than the coincidence. Only in this way can specific conclusions be reached that will contribute with significant novelties to the understanding of the ancient conceptions.

Biondi's proposal deals with an example of the idealizing of Egypt among the Greeks. This is one of the sides of the ambiguous attitude of the Greeks when dealing with the Others. The other side is of course the vision of them as *barbaroi*, who speak unintelligible languages, but Egypt had a millenary culture, and a general principle in the esteem of the Greeks is that the more ancient a human creation, the more it was appreciated. Egyptian culture is used by Plato to highlight some important points of his philosophical system. Biondi rigthly points out that the idea of the immutability of the law is a concept very dear to Plato, but the Athenian philosopher centres his interest in musical *paideia* and in mathematics. And for someone who had the idea that it was possible to create a political system perfect and immutable, the long continuity of the Egyptian political system must have been no doubt a very impressive model. The author

checks to what extent Plato's vision corresponds to real Egyptian practices, reviewing the evidence of some important Egyptian sources. I think that in this case it can be applicable the Diès's concept of "transposition"[1]; Plato starts from a real basis, but adapts it to his philosophical needs. In this case, like in the myth of Theuth in *Phaedrus*, Plato probably had some notices about the Egyptian models, but uses them freely with the intention of covering his proposals with an aura of antiquity and prestige, and for supporting his claim of immutability of the educational principles in the frame of his political project.

The contribution by Alexandra Szalc deals with a real contact between Greeks and Indians, the encounter of Alexander and their followers with the Indian Gymnosophists. It is significant that Greeks have coined a term for these type of 'philosophers': this coinage and the fact that they were mentioned by authors like Aristotle, Strabo, or Plutarch, indicate that they became well-known characters in Greece, almost a literary *topos*. The author has competently checked the fragments that have remained of literary authors who accompanied Alexander (mainly Onesicritus, Aristobulus, and Nearchus), and examined the image of the utopian gymnosophists presented in Alexander Romance, comparing the characteristics described by these texts with Indian sources, with the aim of obtaining a plausible image of the percentage of literary elaboration we have in the Greek description of Gymnosophists. I would add Philostratus to the authors mentioned by Szalc (although he does not use the term Gymnosophists). In the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* the encounters between Apollonius and the Indian sages were probably shaped on the model of the descriptions of the companions of Alexander. Philostratus also shows his great appreciation not only of the teachings of these personalities, but also for their exemplary way of life.

Jeremy Simmons examines how Plutarch proceeds to replace the Egyptian characteristics of Isis and Osiris with Greek ones. Precedents of this procedure were ancient: Hecataeus of Miletus (in Hdt. 2.144) noticed the similarities between the myths of Osiris with the ones of Dionysus and identified both gods, and the same was made by Herodotus himself. Afterwards, a tradition was created in order to explain the similarities between both myths, according to which Orpheus, the prophet of the Dionysiac myths, travelled to Egypt (cf. for instance, Diod. 1.23.2).

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[1] Diès, 1927: 437ff.

Simmons points out that Plutarch 'hellenizes' some features of Isis – probably because he considered her ascension into the Greek pantheon as unacceptable, because it could serve as a challenge to Greek identity – and examines well the philosophical and religious implications of Plutarch's version. The author displays a meticulous and detailed analysis of Plutarch's treatise within the Paideia framework and attempts to preserve the validity of Hellenisms and offers interesting examples. In particular, he points out how cultic practice gives way to interpretations of the Egyptian gods as *daimones*; demonology yields to dichotomies of physical and rational / irrational forces; and finally, Plutarch translates these gods onto existing models of the Divine and philosophical concepts such as *logos*, *hylē*, and *kosmos*.

Stéphanie Anthonioz and Nicolas Tenaillon deal in their paper with a revision of the so-called "Lady Wisdom". They analyze separately this personification in the Books of Proverbs and in Greek representation, with the aim of investigating the possibility of pointing out a possible influence of Greek sources on the Bible. They use a method in which they combine literary analysis of the Biblical personifications of wisdom in the texts and the historical one, underlying social dimension of the texts. Their analysis of philosophical sources allows them to identify a certain number of figures, feminine and mediatory of a knowledge beyond human grasp. Let me just add some small remarks: about the possibility of present in this scope the Egyptian Maat, I would add that Faraone / Teeter 2004 have advanced the hypothesis that Egyptian Maat may have influenced Hesiodic Metis; on the other hand, I think that maybe the Socratic *daimon* and the Platonic Demiurge are realities a little different from those that are studied in the article and they can shed more confusion than light in the discussion.

To sum up, we have different ways to compare Greek texts with other textual productions from several origins, Indian, Egyptian or Biblical, and all of them reveal that there are more interchanges between these cultural areas than normally it is supposed and indicate that there are promising ways of research that allow us to know better the ancient traditions in the fields of wisdom and philosophy.

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